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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israel-PLO Trade Talks Resume in Paris 3 Jan

AU0301141594 Paris AFP in English 1356 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Paris, Jan 3 (AFP)—The fifth round of negotiations on future trade relations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) began in Paris Monday behind closed doors, delegates from both sides announced.

It was unclear how long this latest round of talks, focusing on trade, labour, financial, banking and other economic issues, would last.

The head of the Israeli delegation, David Brodet, was not present at the talks Monday. The Palestinian delegation is headed by Muhammad Abu-Ghawsh, in charge of international economic issues for the PLO.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shi'mon Peres said in December that Israel had made various "concessions" to the PLO in terms of economic issues and was in favor of setting up a common market among Israel, Jordan and autonomous Palestinian territory.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syrian Minister Addresses News Agency Conference

JN0301144494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman this morning opened the 21st conference of the General Assembly of the Arab News Agencies Union [ANAU]. [passage omitted]

Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman delivered a speech in which he said: A few days ago, we bid farewell to 1993, which witnessed sweeping events throughout the world, the gravest of which in our region was the aggression Israel committed against Lebanon to depopulate the south and eradicate the peace process from its roots. Israel was calculating on the assumption that by its new aggression, it would be able to impose new facts in the arena of conflict in order to avoid the requirements of peace and to undermine the U.S. initiative, which considers the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 a basis for achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The minister pointed out that the second event was the Gaza-Jericho agreement, which was born in the back corridors of Oslo away from the Madrid framework and the Washington talks and even further away from joint Arab coordination that Syria considers a true expression of the unity of the Arab position in the peace talks and its commitment to achieving peace on all tracks.

The information minister said that these two events were part of Israeli attempts to disavow the resolutions of the international legitimacy and to single out this or that Arab party by using force against it and drawing it into unilateral negotiations in order to create a deep rift in the Arab position and to impose the peace of the occupier and the outlaw.

Dr. Salman said President Hafiz al-Asad has asserted that a comprehensive and just peace requires an end to the occupation, aggression, injustice, and any other form of hegemony. Therefore, no one can divide peace or bargain over it. The minister also said that events proved the president's assertions to be true. Propagators of alternatives to the Madrid formula have not only lowered their voices, but also acted haphazardly in the crisis of their unilateral agreement.

The information minister touched on the summit expected to be held between President Hafiz al-Asad and President Bill Clinton in Geneva in 10 days amid a negative propaganda campaign aimed at harming the meeting and belittling its importance. He said: This summit will be held within the framework of the Syrian and U.S. efforts committed to achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region. He expressed his hope that this important summit will produce good results that lead to the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy that Israel has been trying to disavow.

The minister also reaffirmed that everything pertaining to our national and pan-Arab issues shows the importance, on both the political and professional levels, of joint ANAU action in the field of news coverage in the Arab, regional, and international arenas. Dr. Salman stressed the importance of conveying facts to the Arab citizens and world public opinion, promoting Arab solidarity, defending our Arab nation's just causes, and explaining to the world our nation's achievements and human values. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

'Abd-al-Shafi Stresses Need for 'Real Democracy'

NC0301160694 Paris AFP in English 1531 GMT 3 Jan 94

[By Hamida Ben Salah]

[Text] Tunis, Jan 3 (AFP)—PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat came under new pressure Monday [3 January] to stop monopolizing key decisions on the peace talks with Israel and to make the organization more democratic.

"There is no hope for us if we don't practice real democracy," according to Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of a seven-member delegation which held talks here with 'Arafat and close colleagues on Sunday and Monday.

He told AFP it was too early to announce the results of the meetings which were to continue until Tuesday.

"We want to broaden the decision-making structure so that it does not stay entirely in Abu-'Ammar's ('Arafat's) hands," 'Abd-al-Shafi, who led negotiations with Israel in Washington before the autonomy accord was signed in September, said after arriving in Tunis Sunday.

He added he would call for a "collective leadership."

'Arafat agreed to meet the delegation representing 120 prominent Palestinians who two weeks ago sent the PLO leader and executive committee a petition calling for more democracy in the organization.

It called for mapping out a strategy for the self-rule negotiations with Israel, setting up a committee for directing the talks, and choosing negotiators based on merit rather than on political considerations.

The petition also demanded respect for human rights once the Palestine Liberation Organization assumes responsibility for affairs in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

At least six of the 12 executive committee members support the demands, according to a Palestinian official.

'Abd-al-Shafi, a founding PLO member who has for months demanded more democracy, said: "Committee appointments should not be made only on the basis of political and personal considerations."

He stressed the need to use Palestinians of ability at this "decisive" time, when the PLO and Israel are failing to make headway in implementing an accord for limited self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Three leading figures in the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation resigned December 26 in protest at 'Arafat's decision to name a 13-member council to head Fatah operations in the Gaza Strip.

'Arafat said the resignations had stemmed from a misunderstanding and promised "serious changes will be carried out" in the Fatah leadership in Gaza in order to satisfy the three.

But a draft constitution for the Palestinians during autonomy was published in Jerusalem last Thursday putting wide powers in 'Arafat's hands.

'Arafat is named as the president of a highly-centralized system with a five-year term in office, renewable once only, but there is no reference to elections.

He controls the police and security forces, issues laws after ratification by the legislative authority, grants pardons and may hand out capital punishment.

The constitution guarantees an independent judiciary under the rule of law and recognizes freedom of religion, opinion and the press and the right to work.

On Saturday, 'Arafat's Fatah faction urged all Palestinian groups to help build a democratic state.

In a statement to mark the 29th anniversary of its creation, Fatah said "democracy and political pluralism" would be at the foundation of a Palestinian state and he pledged to "defend" the principles of democracy.

Talks on the final status of the occupied territories are to start in the third year of Palestinian self-rule. Opposed to the interim autonomy accord are several PLO factions and Moslem fundamentalist groups.

Al-Najjab Views Stalled Talks on Self-Rule

JN0301173794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with PLO Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab by correspondent Sa'id Mu'addi, carried within the "With the Events" program; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Mr. Sulayman al-Najjab, [PLO] Executive Committee member, good evening.

[Al-Najjab] Good evening.

[Mu'addi] Mr. Sulayman al-Najjab, the PLO leadership is holding intensive consultations and contacts in light of political developments. What is the PLO's position on these developments?

[Al-Najjab] If you mean the negotiations held with the Israeli side within the framework of the joint Liaison Committee, we are actually interested in reaching a solution to the issues this committee discussed in Oslo, at Versailles, and in Cairo recently. Regrettably, however, and as you know, the Cairo talks ended in nothing. To say that an agreement was reached is totally untrue. What really happened is that the Israeli side presented its viewpoint on the three issues; namely, the control of the crossing points, the Jericho area, and the settlements in Gaza and the security area required for them.

We replied to this Israeli position by submitting clear proposals to which we have committed ourselves since the Versailles meeting. Regrettably, we noted that in Cairo the Israeli position retreated from the approach on which we agreed in Paris, France.

Still pending is the issue of full Palestinian control of the crossing points leading to Gaza and Jericho in harmony with our control of these territories, from which the Israeli Army will withdraw.

[Mu'addi] What are the amendments requested by the Palestinian side concerning the agreement reached?

[Al-Najjab] No agreement was reached. As I told you, it was only an Israeli viewpoint that we regarded as an incomplete viewpoint. We still insist on controlling the crossing points leading to Gaza and Jericho. The Israeli Army's control of these territories, including the crossing points, will end when it withdraws from them.

We also demanded that the Jericho area be expanded, so it would include the Maqam al-Nabi Musa, which is a holy site for Muslims, and the site of al-Maghtas [the place where Jesus Christ was baptized in the River Jordan], which is, as you know, a holy site for Christians. We also demanded access to the Dead Sea coast and full control of the crossing point between the bridge [on the River Jordan] and the Jericho area. We adhere to this stand, and we believe that it is possible to reach practical solutions that can balance the [Israeli] principle of external security and the principle of no encroachment on the Palestinian control of these territories.

[Mu'addi] Will this new situation return us to square one?

[Al-Najjab] The new situation is supposed to return us to the path we began to follow at Versailles where viewpoints were close and where it was agreed to balance the two principles as I told you; namely, the control of the crossing points by the Palestinian side, and safeguarding the principle that external security will be in the hands of Israel. The crossing points are directly linked to internal security. As is stipulated in the agreement, this kind of security will be the responsibility of the Palestinian side, whether in Gaza, Jericho, or elsewhere in our occupied territories.

[Mu'addi] So, where are matters heading now? What are the coming steps?

[Al-Najjab] We indeed regard the Israeli position as a strange one. As I said, there is a clear retreat in this position. There is also an attempt to impose conditions on us. Of course, to resume negotiations based on the Israeli position defined in Cairo will not happen. Rabin said: Let the Palestinians sweat a little. We tell Rabin: We may sweat if we are in Jericho where the weather is warm now, but in Tunis the weather is cold and no one will sweat.

[Mu'addi] Sulayman al-Najjab, do you believe that the obstacles can be removed in the next few days and that the negotiations will resume in Taba?

[Al-Najjab] For our part, we are making every possible effort to remove these obstacles in a way that will grant us control of the crossing points to Gaza and Jericho. We are really interested in advancing the negotiations, so the Palestinian side will not be held responsible for wasting this historic opportunity. It all depends on the conduct of the Israeli side.

[Mu'addi] Mr. Sulayman al-Najjab, PLO Executive Committee member, thank you very much.

[Al-Najjab] Thank you.

Abu-Sharif Comments on 'Stumbling' Peace Talks

JN0301183694 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Interview with Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, by Faridah al-Shubashi, on 3 January; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Shubashi] Bassam Abu-Sharif, now that the Palestinian-Israeli talks are stumbling due to Tel Aviv's recent interpretation of the Oslo agreement, how can the Palestinians move when there are no terms of reference, the United Nations is excluded, and the United States said that it has nothing to do with the negotiations. How can two sides be left, one of which is Israel with all the power, capabilities, and resources it possesses, and the other, the unarmed Palestinian people?

[Abu-Sharif] The Declaration of Principles, which was signed in Washington, was signed at the White House in the presence of the United States, represented by its President and secretary of state, and other representatives of the world states, particularly the cosponsor of the peace conference that began in Madrid. Therefore, the U.S. and Russian responsibility here is clear. Undoubtedly, what the U.S. President had earlier said, to the effect that the United States is a full partner, gives the United States a moral, political, and practical responsibility to implement the Declaration of Principles and the plan to achieve peace in the region. We can explain the issue clearly as follows: If the Israeli Government really intends to achieve peace, then I see no logical reason for the Israeli Government to make out of the Jericho area or the crossings an obstacle to implementing the Gaza-Jericho First Plan. Based on this, I wish that the Israeli Government would take this into consideration, especially since confidence between the two sides is not entrenched, and because the plan to implement the Declaration of Principles is in itself a plan to bridge the gap of mistrust. I hope that the Israeli Government will not turn these points into obstacles because this is demoralizing and makes the Palestinians and Israelis lose hope in the possibility of achieving peace. However, if you want my personal opinion about what will happen afterwards, I say that the peace process will continue and all the current obstacles can be surmounted through calm negotiations free of tension and mistrust.

Qaddumi To Amman for 'Extremely Important' Talks

JN0401110794 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 4 Jan 94 p 25

[By 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Excerpt] A senior Palestinian diplomatic source in Amman has confirmed to AL-RA'Y that Faruq Qaddumi, alias Abu-al-Lutf, head of the PLO Political Department, will arrive in Amman tomorrow morning from the Egyptian capital.

The source said it is not known yet who will accompany Qaddumi but the delegation is expected to include several PLO Executive Committee members, including Sulayman al-Najjab, Yasir 'Amr, and others.

The source said the talks Qaddumi will have with senior Jordanian officials are extremely important, pointing out that His Majesty King Husayn and President 'Arafat agreed last month to hold such high-level meetings in Amman.

The Palestinian source stressed the PLO's concern about having clear and frank relations with the Jordanian Government to serve the higher interests of Jordan and Palestine. [passage omitted]

Hamas' Nazzal Discusses Gaza-Jericho Agreement

NC0101163094 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Dec 93 p 8

[Interview with Hamas official spokesman Muhammad Nazzal by Taʻat Rumayh and Mahmud Bakri in Khartoum in early December]

[Text] [AL-SHA'B] Brother Muhammad Nazzal, since the signing of the Declaration of Principles called the Gaza-Jericho agreement, the question that keeps coming up is: What is Hamas' position on the representative institutions that will be elected after the implementation of the agreement?

[Nazzal] Hamas' decision is to boycott and not participate in the autonomy elections. This is because these elections are an inseparable part of the Gaza-Jericho plan. Hamas believes this plan eradicates the Palestinian cause. Consequently, not participating in these elections is harmonious with our rejection of this political plan.

[AL-SHA'B] However, there are those who demand that you act as an opposition within these Palestinian institutions. What is your reply? How do you envisage the intifadah under these new conditions?

[Nazzal] Hamas' opposition to this agreement is continuous. We do not believe there can be opposition through participation in these institutions. It is our opinion that participation in these elections is an acknowledgement and a tacit recognition of the legitimacy of this agreement. The issue is not related to an existing political system but concerns the land and the homeland.

As for the intifadah, it can be clearly seen that the military action has escalated quite a lot. It is clear that the number of Israeli casualties is constantly increasing. Perhaps it is one of the few times in which the number of Palestinian martyrs is equal to the number of dead Israelis.

[AL-SHA'B] This has caused great apprehensions about the possibility of Palestinian infighting as a result of this wide gap in positions. What practical measures have you taken to prevent this infighting?

[Nazzal] We believe the other side [PLO] is required to prove its good intentions regarding infighting. For our part, we have reiterated that we are against Palestinian fratricide. Political assassination is not our course. It is the other side that has issued threats and statements.

Therefore, the other side is required to prove its good intentions. For our part, an indication of our good intentions is that during the long course of the negotiations Hamas has not harmed any of the Palestinian negotiating delegation's members. We have issued no threats against anyone. Hamas has not assassinated any Palestinian for political reasons.

[AL-SHA'B] Shaykh Ahmad Yasin [Hamas leader now in Israeli jail] has recently sent several letters to Hamas which some lawyers believe contain directives to the Hamas leadership to adopt other means of struggle.

[Nazzal] Shaykh Ahmad Yasin's letters are clear and have been published by the media. He has clearly stated that he supports the continuation of military action against the occupation and the continuation of the resistance. He has answered some questions that Hamas has submitted to him, seeking his view on them. I do not believe there is disagreement. The escalation of the confrontation against the occupation is unanimously supported by all Hamas quarters.

[AL-SHA'B] What is your current status in the unified leadership of the intifadah?

[Nazzal] Hamas has never been a part of the so-called national leadership of the intifadah. This leadership was comprised of the parties participating in the PLO, namely the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the People's Party, and the Fatah movement. However, after the signing of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, Fatah and the People's Party withdrew from the unified national leadership in compliance with 'Arafat's commitment to halt the intifadah. Thus, the unified national leadership has ceased to exist from the theoretical point of view. Moreover, it has also ceased to exist from the practical point of view, since the start of the negotiations in Madrid.

Following the Gaza-Jericho agreement, the 10 factions have decided to form the so-called national and Islamic leadership of the intifadah. This leadership will comprise the 10 factions' forces in the occupied territories. This leadership exists and we are a member of it. However, so far no final formula has been formulated for the work mechanism of this leadership. However, there is a real determination on our party to work through this leadership in the near future.

[AL-SHA'B] How do you evaluate the relationship between you and these factions, especially as there are huge ideological differences among you? Some analysts believe your agreement with them will not last long.

[Nazzal] The 10 factions are a formula that has existed despite the presence of ideological and political differences. The 10 factions do not share the same view regarding a settlement. Some factions believe in a political settlement. The 10 factions agree on their stand on the current settlement which is based on the Madrid conference. They agree on the need for the intifadah to continue. Therefore, we can say there is an agreement on a minimum common denominator.

[AL-SHA'B] Within the Islamic circle, is there coordination between you and the Islamic Jihad?

[Nazzal] In principle, we have no reservations about cooperating with any Palestinian group calling for the continuation of the resistance against occupation and rejecting the current plan. Hence, our hands are extended to all Islamic and non-Islamic Palestinian forces.

[AL-SHA'B] Does this mean there is no joint coordination within the Islamic ranks in particular?

[Nazzal] There is coordination with the Islamic Jihad within the framework of the 10 factions.

[AL-SHA'B] How do you see the next phase?

[Nazzal] I can say that as far as we are concerned, the resistance must continue in the next phase. We believe the continuation of the resistance will keep the Palestinian issue alive and will blow up all the bases of coexistence with this entity [Israel].

I believe that the Gaza-Jericho agreement will be the bridge that the Israelis will use to enter the Arab region. Therefore, the Arabs and Muslims must fully realize that they are targeted by this agreement.

Hamas Official Views Palestinian 'Alliance'

PM3112135393 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Dec 93 p 2

[Interview with Abu-Muhammad Mustafa, "Hamas official in Syria," by 'Ali al-Salih; place and date not given]

[Text] [Al-Salih] What is the truth about disagreements between Hamas and the Democratic Front [for the Liberation of Palestine] [DFLP] and the Popular Front [for the Liberation of Palestine] [PFLP] in the 10-factions [opposed to the peace process] framework?

[Mustafa] I do not believe there are any fundamental differences over the 10-factions issue and the need for them to remain as they are or to be developed. An agreement has been reached on a name for the alliance framework of these forces, namely the "Alliance of Palestinian Forces." But there was a disagreement over the previous name agreed by all parties, namely the "Palestinian Islamic National Alliance," on which the DFLP and the PFLP backtracked, demanding that it should be changed for fear of it becoming an ideological tendency as a result of the word Islamic.

[Al-Salih] What I meant were any political disagreements over the alliance's program.

[Mustafa] The disagreement over that question revolves around the resolutions adopted by the United Nations and recent Arab summits. The question raised was whether we should accept or reject these resolutions. The position of Hamas and the great majority of the 10 factions was to reject and not to recognize these resolutions, because they endorse the legitimacy of the Zionist presence in Palestine. The resolutions adopted by recent Arab summits endorsed this by accepting international Resolutions 242 and 338. We demanded the application of the resolution adopted by the Arab summit held in Khartoum in 1967.

There is a disagreement over the Palestinian national charter and its emphasis on the Arab and Islamic dimension of the Palestinian issue. The point of disagreement is that the DFLP is demanding the adoption of the PLO's phase program (the 10-point program) endorsed by the Palestine National Council in 1974.

[Al-Salih] Do you mean that they are demanding that the charter be amended?

[Mustafa] They are demanding that part of the phased program be added and UN resolutions endorsed.

[Al-Salih] The PFLP and the DFLP also attribute the disagreement to the big share you are demanding in the alliance leadership and your attempt to impose your influence on it.

[Mustafa] Several proposals were made when we agreed on calling the alliance the "Palestinian Forces Alliance" in order to form a central leadership for this alliance. For our part, we proposed that the Islamists (Hamas and the Islamic Jihad led by Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi) have one-third of the seats—including independents—in the leadership, namely 14 members out of 40. That is, four members for us and 10 independent members to be recommended by us. But our proposal was not accepted, especially by the PFLP and the DFLP. And the brothers in the Islamic Jihad requested that Hamas choose five independents and that it choose the other five, but Hamas rejected this offer.

As a result, and when we felt that some people wanted to marginalize Hamas' role, I thought that the movement should return to the proposal over which it had bargained with (PLO Chairman) Yasir 'Arafat, namely to demand 40 percent of the seats in the alliance leadership for it, 40 percent for the other factions, and 20 percent for the independents.

This is with regard to the central leadership. As for the alliance's executive committee, we proposed a 15-member formation in which each faction has one representative, provided the remaining members are selected by the central leadership. We also proposed that the chairmanship of the leadership be assumed by the factions in turn, provided that the deputy chairman be from

among the independents and that an agreement be reached on who should be the secretary of the leadership.

We were supposed to hold a meeting to discuss these proposals but we preferred to postpone it until today in order to give the other factions a chance to study them.

[Al-Salih] But the other factions—specifically the DFLP and the PFLP—accuse you of evasion because of differences among your leadership ranks over your position on Israel and relations with the United States. What is your opinion?

[Mustafa] As I said, the meeting was postponed because we wanted to give them an opportunity to study the new proposals so that they will not come as a surprise to them. Because the meeting would be futile if the aim is just to present proposals. Second, because the brothers in the leadership were busy and could not come to Damascus.

[Al-Salih] But do you expect the factions to accept the 40-percent proposal, when they, or some of them, rejected or did not accept the 30-percent proposal made by you and the Islamic Jihad?

[Mustafa] We are open-minded and willing to engage in dialogue and debate. This is our position in order to obtain our natural rights so that the alliance will go ahead and play its role.

[Al-Salih] What will the alliance's position be if tomorrow's meeting fails?

[Mustafa] We would continue the dialogue. But in the end we would return to our previous situation, that is 10 factions.

[Al-Salih] The PFLP and the DFLP say there are two tendencies inside Hamas: One represented by Musa Abu-Rizq, head of the movement's Political Bureau, and calling for consolidating the alliance with the opposition factions in order to thwart the Palestinian-Israeli agreement; and another represented by Ibrahim Ghawshah, the official spokesman, and banking on dialogue with Israel and improving relations with the United States. What is your opinion?

[Mustafa] Actually there are no tendencies in Hamas, but, rather, various views presented to its leading and shura [consultative] committees in order to adopt the right view after studying all possibilities. So the minority complies with the majority's view after being convinced that the latter is right.

As for the talk about a disagreement and the existence of two tendencies, it is absolutely groundless. Brothers Ghawshah and Nazzal respect the opinion of brother Musa Abu-Rizq, who in turn respects their composure and views.

With regard to the dialogue with Israel, it is rejected right from the grass roots to the leadership. As for the dialogue with the United States, it is not rejected by anyone, so we cannot say that some people are against or for it.

[Al-Salih] It is also said that there is a tendency espousing the Iranian position calling for action to topple the Palestinian-Israeli agreement by any means, and another tendency which believes that the agreement is going to collapse anyway so there is no need to embark on any action that is bound to weaken Hamas' position among the masses.

[Mustafa] Hamas with all its leaders and grass roots is against the agreement and it is working with all its strength to topple it. But at the same time we are eager not to reach the point of Palestinian infighting.

With regard to Iran, we join anyone seeking to confront this scheme and anyone who is working for the sake of Palestine and its liberation. We are hostile toward no one, nor do we impose our views on anyone. Thus the brothers in Iran have requested nothing of that kind from us. We are eager to maintain balanced relations with everyone on the Arab and Islamic scenes, and we refuse to be linked to any quarter.

[Al-Salih] Are there behind-the-scene mediation efforts to bring your and 'Arafat's views closer, as reported?

[Mustafa] I have no knowledge of such mediations. We are against 'Arafat's method, including the agreement.

[Al-Salih] What truth is there in reports that meetings were held between the Israelis and imprisoned Hamas leaders?

[Mustafa] No meetings in the real sense were held. All that happened is that brother 'Imad al-Faluji (serving a life sentence), and he is a Hamas leader, was summoned to a dialogue. The Israelis raised with him the question of suspending military action. For his part, 'Imad informed them of his inability to make any decision in this connection. So they offered to release him in return for discussing this issue with Hamas leaders outside. But he rejected this proposal, stressing that these matters do not fall within his powers.

In this connection I would like to stress that the statement attributed to Hamas and which implies willingness to cease military attacks in return for [the fulfillment of] some conditions is untrue and designed to cause confusion on the Palestinian scene.

Hamas Spokesman on 'Alliance' Members' Charges

JN3012115793 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 30 Dec 93 pp 28, 24

[By Tawfiq 'Abid]

[Text] During the past two days, the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has come under scathing attack by some members of the 10-faction alliance for demanding

40 percent of the membership in the alliance of Palestinian forces, which is the latest approved name for this alliance.

Some observers commented on this verbal duel that was conducted through the media by asking: Is Hamas equal to those factions that do not have a presence inside the occupied homeland?

Some officials in these factions leveled a number of accusations against Hamas and said that it is seeking to obstruct the march of the alliance and is backing out on what was previously agreed. However, in statements to AL-DUSTUR, Hamas official spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah said: We are going to Damascus today, Thursday, to discuss together the organizational formula of the alliance after agreement has been reached on the name of this alliance; that is, the alliance of Palestinian forces. We presented our view so that there would be guarantees for the march of the alliance and a translation of its resolutions on the ground and so that this march would have credibility in representing the participating factions.

He noted: The leadership of the alliance should be more realistic in evaluating the effective forces in the Palestinian arena. Hamas has highlighted the daily facts of its developing strength through its struggle, intifadah activities, as well as professional union elections inside the occupied territories. Our weight exceeded the quota demanded at the Palestine National Council [PNC] in spring 1990.

Ghawshah added: Our demands for 40 percent of the alliance membership is reasonable. We do not think we provoked any other faction when we presented a draft demanding 40 percent of the membership for Hamas, 40 percent for the other factions, and 20 percent for the independents. It is well known that this alliance is a temporary leadership for the Palestinian people at this critical stage—a leadership that adheres to the constants of these people, taking into consideration that the permanent leadership is the one that will be elected by the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories and in the diaspora in free and honest elections.

Ghawshah went on to say: Hamas considers the local national conferences and the comprehensive national conference as political and media forums to announce the political program and organizational formula to be approved. This conference does not have any organizational authority. Therefore, it is logical to say that whatever the 10 ten factions agree on is considered a final agreement. Hamas understands that the purpose of the national congress is to inform and bless the temporary leadership.

This understanding is important because there are some factions that are trying to make the national conferences, including the general congress, an organizational tool that replaces the PNC. Hamas rejects this, in part and parcel.

Asked about accusations by some factions that Hamas is retreating, Ghawshah said: We did not change our policy, method, or principle. We adhere to the clear Islamic principles of the Palestinian issue. It is a united trend unlike what some of the 10 factions claim.

He said: Our stand toward the Zionist enemy did not change. Our rejection of the Zionist enemy is a principled rejection since it occupies and colonizes an Islamic Arab territory. There can be no dialogue, negotiations, or reconciliation with this usurper. Moreover, there can be no agreement or decisions that diminish the rights of the Palestinian people.

Ghawshah added: Hamas was surprised by some attacks that are unjustified, unless someone wanted to impose their presence by using loud voices instead of offering the blood of martyrs and taking part in our people's intifadah inside the occupied territories.

He said: These loud voices will never affect the course of our movement. We believe that if the alliance is to become a reality on the ground, then the other Palestinian opposition forces, who are dear to us, must deal with the facts that are as clear as the sun. The Islamic trend inside and outside Palestine has become tangible and no one can ignore it except those who want to ignore the light of the sun.

Ghawshah continued: As long as there is an objective handling of issues, then it will be possible to reach a unifying formula that will unite all the factions.

Asked about Hamas' stand in case the other factions reject its demands dealing with representation, Ghawshah said: I believe that the brothers in the factions will conduct a totally objective and reasonable examination of our demands. We hope we will reach an agreement on fighting the Zionist occupation, standing against the Gaza-Jericho First conspiracy, and reinforcing and continuing the intifadah.

He added: We sincerely and strongly hope to develop the 10 factions into a temporary leadership for the Palestinian people so that action would be more effective and so that the people's sympathy with us would be clearer. If the formula of the alliance of Palestinian forces does not succeed, then we shall continue with that formula until we arrive at circumstances that will allow for more sincere unification.

As for what is being said about contacts between Hamas and Israel during the truce which ended last Sunday, Ghawshah said: There are trends that are fishing in murky waters and exploiting the ability of the Zionist enemy and some Arab parties, represented at the Knesset, that have access to Shaykh Ahmad Yasin or other Hamas detainees, and report inaccurate statements by Shaykh Yasin that are not scrutinized.

He added: Contacts between some Israeli officials and Hamas detainees cannot in anyway be be termed as dialogue. Dialogue is only held between free people and

not between the prisoner and the prison warden or between one who has the power and one who is detained. Hamas will never hold any dialogue with the Zionists.

He continued: Through the deputy chief of staff and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, the Zionist enemy rejected the truce proposed by Hamas. Peres accused Hamas of seeking Israeli capitulation. Hence, Hamas has a broad field in which to continue confronting the soldiers and settlers of the Zionist occupation.

'Alliance' Factions Hold Central Meeting 30 Dec

JN3112184093 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 31 Dec 93

[Text] Fadl Shururu [secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command's Political Bureau and official in charge of the front's Information and Central Guidance Department] has stated the following: A central meeting of the Palestinian forces' alliance was held last night, Thursday, 30 December 1993 in the presence of all the alliance's forces. The conferees made the first reading of all the proposals pertaining to the Palestinian alliance's organizational formula.

Shururu also said that the conferees agreed to consider the meetings open in order to monitor developments and to act jointly to support the glorious Palestinian intifadah against the Zionist occupation and the agreement of humiliation.

Hamas Spokesman Denies Failure of Meeting

JN0301102694 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 3 Jan 94 p 29

[By Tawfiq 'Abid]

[Excerpt] Information from Damascus indicates that the meeting of the 10 Palestinian factions, "the alliance of Palestinian forces," has failed. According to the information, the major issues of interest have been delayed for 10 days until representatives of the alliance recalculate and rethink their positions.

Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, thinks otherwise. He said the above information is not precise. The Damascus meeting was successful. It overcame several obstacles and enhanced mutual trust between the 10 factions.

In a statement to AL-DUSTUR, Ghawshah said: It has been agreed to stop media criticism between some factions and to settle any disputes through bilateral and general meetings between the representatives of the factions. It has also been decided to set up a technical committee to study the fact that several parties have been claiming credit for any single jihad operation in Palestine.

Ghawshah added: More important than all of this was debating the organizational formula for which the important meeting was devoted, as well as endorsing a political program and naming the alliance of Palestinian forces.

He said: Delaying the meeting for five days and Hamas' draft for an organizational formula has somewhat beclouded the future of the 10 factions. However, it was explained to the brothers that delaying the meeting was for technical reasons and that the proposed formula has been studied and adopted by the movement's leadership and has its justifications.

Answering a question, he said: The two points raised by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine on 25 October 1993 were settled in the last meeting and a political program was finally adopted by all the factions. [passage omitted]

Ghawshah said the political program emphasizes that the basic arena for jihad is inside the occupied territories. The program eventually aims at reconstruction PLO institutions on democratic bases.

Dissident Fatah Group Statement on Infiltration

JN3012190393 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1750 GMT 30 Dec 93

[Text] The Palestine National Liberation Movement, Fatah, the General Command of the al-'Asifah Forces [Fatah-the Uprising], has issued a military statement, saying:

To uphold our faith in armed struggle as the major course to be taken to liberate the entire Palestinian national soil, the heroic al-'Asifah revolutionaries affiliated with the group of heroic martyr Abu-'Ali Mahdi crossed into Palestine last night, determined to keep the revolution going until victory, even if they had to meet death. They managed to cross what the enemy and its agents call the border strip in southern Lebanon as well as the enemy's security fences. They arrived in northern Palestine and the Dan area and clashed with a mechanized military patrol in Upper Galilee in a heroic and daring operation that continued from 0300 to 0430 on 30 December 1993. They destroyed an enemy military vehicle, killing or wounding some of its occupants. This forced the enemy to use a large number of its troops as well as airborne paratroopers in the operation.

The statement issued by the Fatah Movement, the General Command of the al-'Asifah Forces, added: The enemy has admitted that the operation took place, acknowledged that it suffered some casualties, and attempted to minimize its losses, as usual. However, it has repeatedly said through its news media that it is the first operation of its kind for a long time in which our heroes have managed to breach the Zionist entity's security fences.

During the heroic clash with the enemy, three fedayeen were martyred. They are the following: Patrol commander heroic martyr Lieutenant Ahmad Amin Qa'qur, born in 1971, Amman, he hailed from Tarqumiyah, Hebron; heroic martyr 1st Sergeant Ashraf Hammad Mansur, born in 1970, Dar'a, he hailed from Beersheba; and heroic martyr 1st Sergeant Ahmad Rafiq al-Mallah, born in 1973, Nahr al-Barid, he hailed from 'Illar, Tulkarm.

Fatah Members Celebrate 29th Anniversary

TA3012201593 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 30 Dec 93

[Video report by correspondent Shlomi Eldar]

[Excerpts] Fatah members are continuing celebrations marking the anniversary of the organization's establishment, which falls on Saturday [1 January]. The Fatah Hawks held a procession in the al-Shati' refugee camp and fired weapons in the air. Earlier, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] issued its own congratulations to Fatah.

[Begin recording] [Eldar] For the first time since the establishment of Fatah in the Gaza Strip 29 years ago, the organization's anniversary celebrations are designed to prove its strength and size. This is the first time that the organization is celebrating as a future establishment body and not as an underground movement. Nevertheless, the festivities are taking place under the shadow of a crisis. Fatah is finding it difficult to make the transformation from an underground terrorist organization to a body that is recognized as the legitimate authority in the Palestinian autonomy. The struggles at the top are greatly undermining Fatah's activity in the Palestinian street. Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the former head of the Palestinian delegation, who is considered an opponent of the Declaration of Principles, said that anyone wanting to celebrate today, still had some waiting to do. [passage omitted]

Isma'il Haniyah, a returned Hamas deportee, was among the well wishers in the crowd. He came to congratulate Fatah on behalf of Hamas and to express solidarity. Fatah, Haniyah said, was the first to fire the guns of the struggle. People in the audience noted that Haniyah's participation was an indication of the desire by Hamas to be integrated in the autonomy's founding institutions.

Tomorrow afternoon, Gaza city will host the main rally, in which approximately 20,000 people are expected to take part. This will hopefully prove that the Fatah is still in control of the Gaza Strip. [end recording]

Force-17 Established in Territories

TA0201125294 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 2 Jan 94 p A3

[Report by Yosi Torpstein and 'Amira Hess]

[Excerpt] Yesterday, Fatah announced the establishment of a branch of Force-17 in the territories. The declaration was made in a leaflet disseminated in Hebron to mark the 29th anniversary of the establishment of Fatah—1 January.

The establishment of "the militia of Force-17 at this time is part of a well-defined work plan," the leaflet notes, "and is not an attempt to jump the leading wagon or ask for power or leadership positions—as some believe. We chose this date to make the declaration in order to express our adherence to and confidence in all branches of the Palestinian leadership. We will use our full force to serve the leadership and provide our people with stability and security. We renew our pledge of allegiance to the Palestinian revolution."

The authors of the leaflet further explain that Force-17 in the territories will be a pillar of support for "the best men of our nation." In the past, the force served as Yasir 'Arafat's personal guard, but later on 'Arafat distanced himself from the members of the force. The leaflet promises that "today, we begin our journey for the construction of security for our Palestinian nation."

Palestinian sources have estimated that behind the leaflet are hawkish Fatah elements which are not pleased with the decision to end terror attacks against Israeli targets, especially after the settlers' riots and the freeze in the negotiations.

According to the sources, another possibility is that the Fatah central leadership wishes to demonstrate determined presence in view of the eroding support for Fatah among the residents of the territories. Fatah also wishes to prove to Israel that, should the negotiations with Israel fail, its leadership has other options. About a month ago, Fatah Hawks squads were set up in Hebron. Unlike the original squads in Gaza, the Fatah Hawks in Hebron are not made of armed fugitives, but of activists of the al-Shabiba youth movement. The fact that Fatah Hawks squads, and now Force-17, were established in this region indicates a radicalization of Fatah in the Hebron region, mainly in view of exacerbating confrontations with the city's settlers.

Another leaflet Fatah disseminated yesterday to mark the anniversary of its establishment says that the struggle must continue in all forms—on the battlefield and at the negotiating table. [passage omitted]

Algeria

Parties Discuss FIS Participation in Dialogue

LD0301233494 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] In anticipation of the expected national conference at the end of January, many parties are currently holding consultations and making moves to coordinate stances.

Within this context, a meeting was held yesterday at the headquarters of the Movement for Democracy in Algeria and included representatives from the National Liberation Front, Islamic Al-Nahda Movement, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], and the Movement for Democracy in Algeria.

AL-KHABAR newspaper said in today's issue that preparations have been going on for about a week to hold this meeting, during which the preliminary document, prepared by the National Dialogue Commission, the issue of whether or not to take part in the institutions of the transitional period, and the issue of guarantees and the sides that would participate in the National Conference were discussed.

AL-KHABAR added that the participation of the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front occupied a sizable part of the meeting's time.

It seems, according to the newspaper, that these parties have formed a unified pivot to put pressure on the National Dialogue Commission when the multilateral meetings are resumed after tomorrow, Wednesday [5 January].

Before the anticipated meetings between the National Dialogue Commission and the parties, the National Party for Solidarity and Development said in a statement, a copy of which was delivered today to APS, that the multifaceted crisis, in particular the political crisis that resulted from the suspension of the December elections in 1991, can only be treated through a serious dialogue between the authority and the three winning parties in the elections.

In order to make the National Conference and the transitional period successful, Bencherif's party [National Party for Solidarity and Development] proposes the release of political prisoners, the closure of the detention camps in the south, easing the conditions of the state of siege, and reinstating workers dismissed for their political views.

At the end, the statement called for achieving all-embracing reconciliation within the framework of the reciprocal compromises and the return of tranquility to the people.

Party Leader Rejects Dialogue With Islamists

LD2912232593 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Interview with Said Saadi, secretary general of the Rally for Culture and Democracy in Algeria, by correspondent Muriel Pomponne; date and place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] Our guest this evening in the second part of Afrique Soir is Said Saadi, the secretary general of the Rally for Culture and Democracy [RCD], in Algeria. Said Saadi has recently set up a new movement, the Movement for the Republic [Mouvement pour la Republique] in order to advocate an ideal that is different from that of the Islamists. [passage omitted]

[Pomponne] You are a priori rather against a dialogue with Islamists who are said to be moderate.

[Saadi] I do not know many. Those said to be moderate have aligned themselves with the stance of the extremists; it is a movement of extremists that falls within the framework of violence and is a movement that necessarily tends toward one-upmanship. Anyone who wants to be relatively moderate is condemned by the very dynamism of this movement. Kebir, who was said to be the soft version of the fundamentalist movement has recently been obliged to join the stances of armed groups in order to stay in the race. It is not I who reject the debate, unfortunately it is the fundamentalists, who, for the moment, slit throats and kill, and it is the only form of communication they choose to address the people. It cuts short any form of speculation. Dialogue is a will to respect the life of others first and their ideas second. This has never been the intention of fundamentalists.

[Pomponne] Is this the way you analyze, for instance, the communique published by the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] recently, which advocates the continuation of the armed struggle?

[Saadi] This communique has only one interest: It is the first time that the FIS, which was said to be a political organization, that up to now has not followed armed action and acts of violence in general, has ended up by advocating this bloody demonstration that it has imposed on the country. I personally have never believed in the slightest possibility of an organized evolution of the FIS, even as political authorities. I was often in prison with them, I know all their officials, and I know exactly what they are planning to do. [passage omitted]

[Pomponne] You said that you think that the Army could play a more important role. According to you, what is the role it must and can play?

[Saadi] I have not said that the Army could play a more important role. The Army already plays an important role and has been doing so since 1962, the date of independence. I say that I did not know whether the Army could now adapt to change well, when the matter is not simply a military operation. The Algerian crisis is not military but is above all political. Will the Army take

the positions it should in very complicated situations? Will it handle the current situation; knowing that up to now it has already found people who use it as a front, as a political shop window, while keeping power. I do not think that this scenario is now possible.

[Pomponne] What do you want it to do?

[Saadi] That the Army remains a republican institution that shoulders completely the republican state whose institutions it has the duty to defend and not to make.

FIS Said To Begin Television Transmission

JN0301152894 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 1 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[By Jamal Khashuqji in Jeddah]

[Excerpt] Sources of the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front and citizens in Algiers who were contacted by AL-HAYAH over the telephone confirmed that the front began television transmission last Monday [27 December] under the name of Salvation Television, which was monitored in the capital.

By this, the front is adding clandestine television transmission to its radio transmission named al-Wafa' Radio, which regularly transmits every Saturday from an unknown place. [passage omitted]

Human Rights Group: 700 Islamists in Detention

LD0201141494 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] In a statement to AL-MUJAHID today, Rezzaq Bara, chairman of the National Human Rights Monitoring Group, indicated that about 780 Islamists were still in detention at the Oued Namous center in Bechar and the In Amguel center in Tamanrasset. He promised that efforts would continue to obtain the closure of these two centers. Bara said that the implementation of the anti-terrorism law had led to abuse in some cases, especially with regard to the way in which searches were conducted and the failure of the authorities to respect the duration of preventive detention, which does not exceed 12 days according to the anti-terrorism law.

The chairman of the National Human Rights Monitoring Group did not conceal the fact that there were abuses and a number of suspicious deaths. According to him, the monitoring group had asked for judicial inquiries to be opened in this regard.

On the question of torture, which the monitoring group condemns, Bara stressed that no incriminating complaints had been made to the judicial authorities, which would have made it possible to open a judicial inquiry against those accused of practicing torture. He said that the only thing in this respect was that about 12 complaints of ill treatment had been recorded. Judicial inquiries had been opened on these issues and those against whom the accusations had been proven had been punished.

Bara said that the detainees he had mentioned were those remaining from an original total of 9,000 detainees who had been sent to seven different security centers last March.

HSC, Dialogue Commission Reject FLN Proposal

LD0301180294 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] A circular issued by the National Liberation Front [FLN] notes the rejection by the Higher State Council [HSC] and the National Dialogue Commission of the FLN Political Bureau's proposal to convene a meeting between the HSC, the National Dialogue Commission, and a group of six political parties, in order to discuss measures sufficient to make the national conference successful.

The FLN circular adds that the party's general secretariat received the rejection in two letters, the first from the HSC chairman, and the second from the chairman of the National Dialogue Commission.

UGTA Rejects Plan To Reschedule Debts

LD0301142594 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] The Algerian General Workers Union [UGTA] rejected any agreement, in whatever form, that seeks to reschedule Algerian debts. This is what UGTA Secretary General Abdelhak Benhamouda was saying.

In a statement published in yesterday's issue of the newspaper EL-MASSA, Benhamouda said that an agreement in the aforementioned field will turn the IMF into a gendarme in Algeria.

The UGTA secretary general explained that talks on the question of the debts should be assigned to an Algerian negotiator who has the backing of the people.

Benhamouda also pointed out that workers are not the only ones to be blamed for the state of complacency that one sees in the national enterprises. He called for work to be valued by practical and material encouragement and that the law must be respected by everyone.

7 Killed, 5 Detained 30-31 Dec

LD0301230194 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Security services today announced that seven armed individuals were killed and five others arrested between last Thursday and Friday [30-31 December 1993] in Blida, Medea, Algiers, Boumerdes, and Batna provinces.

According to the same source, the person who planned the assassination of the Saida court prosecutor was among those arrested.

Egypt

Musa, PLO's Qaddumi View Obstacles to Accord

NC0401113294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1100 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held a meeting today with Chief of the PLO Political Department Faruq Qaddumi, Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal, and Fatah Movement representative in Cairo Zuhdi al-Qidrah.

The conferees discussed developments in the Palestinian issue and obstacles delaying the implementation of Gaza-Jericho Accord. They also assessed the situation in light of the Israeli stance on implementing the accord and the Palestinian position.

Qaddumi Dubs Israelis 'Liars'

JN0401073694 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, has said that there is nothing called a Cairo document, a document the Israelis demanded be a basis for resuming negotiations. He described the Israelis as liars and said: I know and Egypt knows that the Israelis presented forged maps during the Taba talks.

Qaddumi noted that one of the reasons he expressed reservations over the Declaration of Principle is his confidence that Israel would not carry out its promises, as he put it.

Qaddumi was talking to reporters upon arrival in Cairo last night. Qaddumi will meet with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today and then leave for Amman tomorrow to resume coordination with Jordan in view of King Husayn's statement in which he clearly voiced resentment over the absence of serious coordination.

Within this context, Qaddumi regarded talk about a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation to be premature. Discussing this at present would complicate matters, as he put it.

It is worth mentioning that King Husayn has recently said that he has asked Yasir 'Arafat to drop the word confederation from his lexicon.

Musa Returns From Amman With Message for Mubarak

NC0301173594 Cairo MENA in English 1637 GMT 3 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, Jan 3 (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa returned home this evening after a few hours' visit to Amman during which he handed King Husayn of Jordan a message from President Husni Mubarak and held talks with the Jordanian premier and foreign minister.

Musa said the Jordanian monarch entrusted him with a reply message to President Husni Mubarak.

The Egyptian top diplomat said his talks with King Husayn and Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali covered developments of the Mideast peace process and bilateral ties.

The foreign minister voiced hope that the Palestinian and Israeli delegations would resume their talks shortly.

He will present a report to President Mubarak on the upshot of his talks in Amman.

Musa will hold talks tomorrow with chief of the PLO Political Department Faruq Qaddumi, who is due in Cairo later today.

Paper Views Musa's Jordan Visit

NC0401082394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0605 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH affirms that Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's visit to Jordan is linked to the comprehensive peace process in the Middle East and its developments. The visit, it adds, comes within the context of Egypt's continuous efforts for peace and security in the Arab region in the eastern Mediterranean and its eagerness to defuse inter-Arab differences.

In its editorial today, Tuesday, the paper says that Musa's hope for more open Arab relations in 1994 stems from Egypt's belief in the unity and harmony of Arab interests. It notes that Egypt is conducting preventive diplomacy at the Arab level in general and at the Jordanian-Palestinian level in particular.

The paper explains that Egypt is always open to Arab cooperation within the context of mutual respect and nonintervention in internal affairs. It affirms that negotiations on peace in the eastern Mediterranean requires the Arabs to maintain unity.

The paper says everyone must realize that Arab reconciliation at this time is vital to achieving a just and comprehensive peace and that this goes beyond the post-peace phase to building modern Arab economic resources.

Islamic Group Defies New Asyut Security Plan

NC0301220894 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 29 Dec 93 p 1

[Report by 'Abd-al-Rahim 'Ali]

[Text] With the beginning of the new year, the Interior Ministry is preparing a major reshuffle of its apparatuses in Asyut Governorate. The reshuffle will involve 90

percent of the officers and undercover detectives in the State Security and Criminal Investigation Departments. The changes were approved after it was confirmed that terrorists know the names of most of the police officers operating in Asyut and can identify them.

The changes will be made in light of a new security strategy to confront terrorism. It involves staging intensive mobile patrols and fixed and mobile ambushes throughout the governorate and reinforcing the undercover police presence in the streets of the city of Asyut.

The new plan will change the locations of fixed civilian police ambushes. One plainclothes policeman will stand guard in front of the target that is being protected, while the other members of the ambush team will scatter over a 10-meter distance around the target so that they will not be easily hunted, like the victims of the recent terrorist attack were.

This plan was being developed at the same time that a large number of officers from the criminal investigation and special operation departments from the various governorates were arriving in Asyut.

In reaction to these security measures to crack down on the terrorist dens and the terrorist leaders, the Islamic Group in Upper Egypt has proclaimed its defiance, claiming that it has a strategy to confront them.

Planning Minister on Middle-Eastern Market

NC0201181794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 2 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning, has affirmed that the state is aware of all the challenges noted in President Husni Mubarak's speech before the joint session of the People's Assembly and Consultative Council on Thursday, 11 November, on the occasion of the beginning of the new parliamentary round.

The Consultative Council, under the chairmanship of Consultative Council Speaker Dr. Mustafa Kamal Hilmi, today met to discuss the report by the committee formed to respond to the president's statement. Dr. al-Janzuri spoke to the Consultative Council in today's session. He said that the government was not surprised by these challenges and has known where it was heading ever since it set the 20-year plan and reached the stage of economic and financial reform control, and embarked on trying to confront all the challenges mentioned by the president in his statement.

Dr. al-Janzuri clarified that by introducing production we will manage to confront the problems of unemployment, slum areas, and bureaucracy. He noted that without culture and education, we cannot begin to confront these challenges. He pointed out that in the 1993/1994 plan, an investment of 1.6 billion Egyptian pounds will be allocated to education, because we cannot launch any reform projects without good education. Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri affirmed that security and stability cannot be realized while slum areas continue to exist in 11 governorates, specifically in 434 locations. He noted that the initial estimates for improving these areas amount to around 4 billion pounds. He said that some projects for the infrastructure have been set for southern Egypt, most important of which is the dual railway line to Aswan. He said that the infrastructure projects have a social dimension too.

He said that the 1994/95 plan will include a new vision of production performance to avert the dangers coming from the GATT agreement. He noted that Egypt imports foodstuffs amounting to $3 billion a year and that after removing subsidies and without the duty on food exports, this number will double.

He added that 1.6 million feddans of land cannot be allocated for fruits and vegetables at a time when half this land can be allocated for planting oil seeds or sugar products. He noted that Egypt imports edible oils amounting to around $0.5 billion in addition to $700 million for the importation of sugar from abroad.

Dr. al-Janzuri noted the regional challenges involved in the Middle-Eastern market, saying that the achievement we aspire to must pass through an inter-Arab dialogue before initiating an Arab-Israeli one.

The deputy prime minister noted that inter-Arab trade does not exceed five percent, while Arab trade with the West is 95 percent. He noted also that Arab investments in Arab territories do not go beyond five percent, while they reach 85 percent in non-Arab territories. He pointed out that facing up to these challenges requires Arab cohesion. The Arab common market started simultaneously with the EC, but we Arabs did not achieve what we hoped to achieve, he said.

Dr. al-Janzuri added that the Egyptian people will witness a breakthrough in production, less reliance on imports, and more employment of their labor force in the upcoming three years of [words indistinct]. This will further consolidate security and stability, he said.

Libya

JANA Political Editor Assails VOA Commentary

LD0401093994 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0725 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Tripoli, 4 Jan, (JANA)—Voice of America [VOA] has relayed a commentary in which it attacks the brother leader of the revolution and distorts his addresses to the masses who rushed to receive him everywhere in the Great Jamahiriyah. In its commentary, which expresses the views of the U.S. Government, VOA piled accusations against Libya irresponsibly and without any proof.

JANA's political editor has commented on this. He says: This commentary could be explained on the basis of two facts:

First, it is a hysterical reaction to the huge demonstrations of anger and defiance that erupted everywhere in the Great Jamahiriyah, and to the scenes of the human flood in which the masses joined their leader, declaring the historic decision of the Libyan people to defend their sovereignty and right to an independent honorable life.

Second, it is an attempt to overtake and cover-up the new evidence that has appeared recently, which confirmed Libya's innocence to the accusations of the so-called Lockerbie case, and also to overtake and cover-up the exposure of the political aims beyond these accusations.

The editor added:

The irresponsible attack on the existing Jamahiri system in Libya is an attack on the options chosen freely by the Libyan people, and in which they have become the first people in history to declare the people's authority. This marked the start of the era of the masses in which the people can control their authority, wealth, and weapons, and decide their own fate directly, without being represented by anyone.

As for the quotations taken from the leader's addresses—used by the commentary in order to support the accusations directed by the VOA—as usual, they deliberately distorted these addresses and cut them to fit these accusations. VOA forgot that all the speeches that it quoted were made in public, were relayed by radio and TV, and the whole world heard them.

The U.S. Government, whose official views are expressed by VOA's commentary, understands, perhaps before anyone else, that Libya is innocent of all the accusations directed by the radio in its commentary. The American Government and the world know that Libya has condemned terrorism and no longer allows any organization suspected of connections with terrorism to be present on its territories. Libya has invited the UN secretary general to send a commission to confirm that Libya is free of any alleged camps for training terrorists, but there was no response to this invitation.

U.S. Officials Cited on Pan Am Affair

LD3112092693 Tripoli JANA in English 0809 GMT 31 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli, al-Kanun [Dec] 31, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The former head of American intelligence, (CIA), William Webster has said that the accusation made against nationals from the Great Jamahiriya implicating them in the downing of a Pan Am airline, stems from political intentions which are related to the so-called 'peace' process and the attempt to gain allies in the gulf war.

The American roving ambassador for anti terrorism affairs during Bush's term, Jerry Braemer, gave press statements saying that the levelling of accusations against Libya was related to the so-called 'requirements' of the peace process in the Middle East and the issue of Western hostages held in Lebanon.

John Murphy, a relative of one of the victims of the Pan Am American airliner said that the families of the victims of the plane were smelling something fishy emanating from this turnabout in the case against Libya.

Gregorian Calendar Replaced With Lunar Calendar

LD0401144394 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Tripoli, 4 Jan (JANA)—It has been decided to abolish the use of the Gregorian calendar in the Great Jamahiriyah and replace it with the Arab lunar calendar, which was abandoned for colonialist reasons. [passage omitted]

Morocco

Ministry Not Notified of By-Election Ruling

LD3012140393 Rabat MAP in English 1225 GMT 30 Dec 93

[Text] Rabat, Dec. 30 (MAP)—An authorized source at the elections and census department said the Ministry of Interior was not notified as to any decision to cancel the result of elections in any constituency and was not informed by any side of the content of a ruling made by the constitutional chamber.

The press service at the elections and census department was reacting to some news reports that parliamentary by-elections should be held in some constituencies of which the judiciary authorities annulled the results. In this regard, the source underlines the government's commitment to organize in due time by-elections as soon as it receives judiciary decisions from the Supreme Court's constitutional chamber.

Sudan

Minister on Garang Talks, U.S. Involvement

PM3112160593 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 29 Dec 93 p 4

[Muhammad Sa'id al-Hasan report on interview with Dr. Ghazi Salah-al-Din, Sudanese minister of state for presidential affairs, in London; date not given]

[Text] Dr. Ghazi Salah-al-Din, Sudan's minister of state for presidential affairs, has revealed that his country has informed the presidents of the IGADD [Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development] states (Kenya, Uganda, Eritrea, and Ethiopia) that "hostile quarters" are making moves to prevent the Garang movement from negotiating with Khartoum.

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Salah-al-Din accused the Garang movement of turning into a separatist movement. In this connection he cited the Washington seminar held in October, which resulted in an agreement between the two wings of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement on the demand for self-determination.

Salah-al-Din added that Sudanese President Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir had told leaders of the IGADD states that, despite his government's commitment to finding a peaceful solution to the southern Sudan problem, "there can be no talk of favorable conditions for peace talks in light of the rebel factions' adherence to the Washington document. Because it is a hostile document talking about pooling efforts not for the sake of peace, but for the sake of resisting the government and fighting it in the north. It also mentions the south's separation from the north, especially as this document assumes importance through a document backed by the United States, as the U.S. Administration participated in all debates and discussions between the two rebel factions, sometimes at the highest level and in the presence of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State George Moose. Besides, some of the two rebel factions' meetings were held inside the U.S. Department of State premises."

Asked about the chances of success for any future negotiations between the government and the Garang movement, Salah-al-Din said: "We believe that the factors pushing the peace process forward are stronger than the factors delaying peace, and that external factors are strong.

"At present peace prospects are better than before. First, because of all the parties' strong conviction. Second, because the rebels' dreams of liberating Sudan and establishing their imaginary state have collapsed."

Asked whether the government had proof of foreign intervention to obstruct peace efforts in southern Sudan, he said: We have clear evidence and proof. If we take the Washington seminar as an example, we will realize that the Washington document is hostile and conspiratorial toward Sudan. However, it has succeeded in one thing, namely shaking the cohesion of the so-called national [opposition] alliance or grouping. Immediately after the Washington seminar we saw that there were conflicting interpretations of the Washington document from the grouping's leaders. I also believe that the seminar has succeeded in sowing the seeds of suspicion and spreading confusion inside this group.

On the statement issued by the United States and in which it denied its intervention at official level in the Washington seminar, saying that it favors a cease-fire in order to alleviate the suffering in the south, Dr. Ghazi Salah-al-Din said: "We have been accustomed to the clarification of U.S. positions recently. In anything, it proves the confusion in U.S. foreign policy, not only with regard to Sudan, but to Somalia, Bosnia, and others as well. Our reply to these statements is that the attempt to give the impression that the U.S. Congress operates in complete isolation from the U.S. Administration is merely a U.S. theatrical show which cannot fool anyone. We know that Congress derives its stands and views from U.S. Department of State reports. This separation among U.S. institutions is designed to fool the simple and naive, but this trick cannot fool people."

He pointed out that the U.S. Administration had acknowledged that a representative of the U.S. Department of State had attended all negotiation sessions between the two factions of the Garang movement in Washington. And that Reik Mashar, leader of one of the two factions, issued a statement on the circumstances surrounding the nonsigning of the document, in which he said that a meeting was held in the U.S. Department of State premises on 22 October 1993 to persuade the two sides to sign the document. Salah-al-Din said that all this proves "the U.S. Department of State's involvement in the seminar and its results."

He added: "We believe that it is more useful for the U.S. Administration to correct its intentions and actions toward Sudan, because the march of history is stronger than us all."

On Sudanese-Egyptian relations, Salah-al-Din pointed to the distinctiveness of these relations. He said that "Sudan has spared no efforts to talk about this special characteristic. And when we talk about this special characteristic, we mean the inevitable improvement in relations with regard to the final outcome, regardless of the side effects here or there. It is known that a meeting was held between President Lt. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir and President Husni Mubarak, during which they reached agreements, some of which have been implemented. The implementation of the other agreements has been delayed, but not because of us. This includes a meeting between the two foreign ministers in Sudan. It has been postponed three times, and we hope it will take place because, for our part, we have never hesitated to express good intentions. Over a period of a few months our foreign minister visited Cairo five times. And Lt. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir too visited Cairo, and his deputy Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih visited Cairo twice last year. This alone is sufficient to prove our intentions. And recently cordial statements were made by Egyptian officials regarding the Washington document, proving the Egyptian Government's interest in Sudanese territorial integrity—which is good and positive. But we need more goodwill assurances vis-a-vis the Hala'ib issue, because the good statements concerning the Washington seminar tend to coincide with worrying statements on Hala'ib and its annexation as an electoral constituency and the establishment of construction projects in it."

As for relations with Libya, Salah-al-Din admitted that "the integration process has been hampered by some events and developments, not on our part or that of the jamahiriyah, but on the part of Western states which were unhappy to see a sensible experiment not based on

slogans but, rather, on practical foundations. So they declared their embargo against the jamahiriyah, and they are toughening this embargo—which has affected Libya's and Sudan's ability to communicate, even though our contacts with the brothers in Libya and the attempts to advance relations with it have not been interrupted.

And in this context, President al-Bashir visited Libya after the embargo was imposed, crossing deserts and seas. And Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr visited Libya twice. And the ministerial committee headed by Cabinet Affairs Minister Dr. 'Awad al-Jaz went to the joint ministerial committee's meetings in October.

Defense Minister Addresses Military Ceremony

EA0301171094 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, president of the Republic and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, yesterday attended at Marrikh Stadium the celebrations marking the graduation of Batch 42 of the military college, Batch 16 technicians, and the qualification of Batch 12.

The graduation ceremony was addressed by Minister of Defense Major General Hassan 'Abd-al-Rahman Ali who confirmed that the graduation of this batch of officers comes at a time of historic challenges facing the Sudanese nation. He pointed out that the graduating men are armed with science, knowledge, and faith as well as the art of warfare. Maj. Gen. Hassan 'Abd-al-Rahman said cultural changes are affecting Sudan but its ship is sailing towards its destination.

He added that the people who are challenging Sudan to a fight and are getting ready to destroy it will face the might of an army which is firm and steadfast, armed with faith as well as with the equipment of warfare. The minister of defense said that the graduating officers are an elite group from the sons of people who pledged themselves to serve this homeland and this continent. They will protect the land and the soil. His excellency praised the role of the military college in the qualifying of officers and giving room to the brothers and the friends from the Arab homeland and the African continent.

Iraqi Minister Visits, Discusses Labor Ties

EA0201194094 Khartoum SUNA in English 1635 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 2 Jan (SUNA)—Major General Dominic Kassiano, minister of labour and administrative reform, met Sunday [2 January] the Iraqi minister of planning and labour now visiting the country to participate in the celebrations of the 38th anniversary of independence.

The meeting discussed cooperation between the two countries in the sphere of labour and professional training and expressed hope for reaching detailed agreements in this field. [passage omitted]

Civil Aviation Head on Russian Plane Seizure

EA3012193093 Khartoum SUNA in English 1614 GMT 30 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 30 Dec (SUNA)—Director general of Civil Aviation Corporation, Brig. Abd al-Ilah Ali Safi al-Nur, said the seizure of the Russian plane which was contracted by the Sudanese Farnas Company at Luxor Airport in Egypt was due to violation of Sudan law of the Civil Aviation Corporation outstanding financial obligations to the company which hired it. [sentence as received]

He said to SUNA that the Russian Antonov plane hired by the Sudanese Farnas Company had taken off from Al-Ubayyid town airport on 26 December without permission from the authorities of the airport, entered suddenly the runway and flew to unknown destination.

He added that Civil Aviation Corporation has communicated with all neighbouring airports enquiring about the plane, indicating that the plane landed at Luxor Airport in Egypt where its crew presented false information to the Egyptian officials claiming that the plane had come from Entebbe Airport, Uganda.

He also said that after they were informed that the plane landed at Luxor Airport they asked Egyptian aviation officials to impound the plane pending arrival of Farnas Company delegation to settle obligations against the plane crew.

Tunisia

Spanish Foreign Minister Begins Official Visit

LD0301162394 Madrid RNE International in Spanish 1400 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] In Tunisia, Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana has started an official visit. During the first day with his counterpart, he chaired a working meeting dedicated to the Maghreb and to the problems of the Mediterranean area. Solana explained the position of the Spanish Government on the dialogue between countries of the European Union and those of the Arab Maghreb Union.

Previously, Solana discussed with the Tunisian interior and justice ministers problems related to security in the Mediterranean region, Maghreb emigration, and European Union border control policy.

Solana is scheduled to meet the Tunisian minister of international cooperation and investment, with whom he will discuss the current state of the general framework of the financial and economic cooperation agreement, in which there is a Spanish credit line of $1 billion.

Tomorrow, Tuesday [4 January], before leaving for Madrid, the Spanish foreign minister will meet the Tunisian president.

Meets Yahya, Interior Minister

LD0301194794 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] This morning, Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya, had a conversation with his Spanish counterpart at the ministry's headquarters.

Following the conversation, the two ministers chaired a working session attended by the delegations of the two countries as well as the Tunisian ambassador to Spain and the Spanish ambassador to Tunisia.

In a statement to the Tunisie Afrique Presse, the Spanish foreign minister described relations between the two countries as distinguished. He explained that the talks centered around bilateral issues and other questions of mutual concern and dealing with Europe and the Mediterranean.

Mr. Solana expressed his satisfaction with the closeness of the viewpoints of the two countries and also the closeness of their views on the questions that had been raised.

The Spanish foreign minister added that the prospects for Tunisian-Spanish cooperation were very good whether in the economic or the political fields. He noted that some practical proposals were put forward which concerned trade relations and partnership between the two countries.

[Later in the same newscast, the radio reports that talks took place this afternoon at the Interior Ministry between Tunisian Interior Minister Abdallah Kallel and Solana, as well as the Spanish ambassador to Tunisia. "During the meeting the two ministers reviewed the various aspects of Tunisian-Spanish relations, particularly after the visit of His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to Spain, which opened up numerous fields for strengthening the ties of understanding and closer links between the two friendly countries." The conversation also touched on "a number of issues of mutual interest in the security and development fields and the prospects for strengthening bilateral cooperation and the means necessary to further promote and develop this cooperation for the benefit of joint Tunisian-Spanish interests."

[The radio also reports Solana was received by Chedli Neffati, general secretary of the Democratic Constitutional Assembly, RCD. During this meeting, "a review took place of the excellent relations between the two friendly countries and the prospects of consolidating and promoting them for the benefit of the Tunisian and Spanish peoples." Neffati "pointed out the distinguished role of the RCD in the national arena and the development drive." The meeting also "dealt with the relations between the RCD and the Spanish Socialist Workers Party and ways of developing and consolidating them."]

Foreign Ministry Applauds RSA Moves

LD2512092393 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Tunisia has expressed its satisfaction in a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry after the South African parliament's approval of the interim constitution calling for the equality of all citizens in South Africa without discrimination by color or race.

It stressed that this new gain constitutes without any doubt new mortar in the building of a free and just society. It is also a sign indicating that the democratic process of this fraternal country is an irrevocable choice.

While Tunisia values the courage of the presidents, Mandela and De Klerk, and their foresight, it expresses hope that the multi-racial elections scheduled to take place in April 1994 will bring about a democratic non-racial state under a unified structure with all its capabilities.

Ben Ali Delivers New Year Message to Nation

LD3112195893 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1900 GMT 31 Dec 93

[Address by President Ben Ali to nation on the occasion of New Year's Eve—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Citizens: With the beginning of the New Year, we renew the hope that Arab concord will be realized, that the construction of the Arab Maghreb Union will make progress, that the Palestinian people will be able to regain their legitimate rights, that the tragedy of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina will come to an end, and that security and peace will prevail throughout the world. I greet you and greet the sons of Tunisia abroad and their brother members of the Maghreban and Arab communities. I wish you all continued happiness and success, and we wish Tunisia well every year.

Western Sahara

Polisario Repeats Threat To Paris-Dakar Rally

LD2912000693 Madrid RNE-1 Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Through its spokesman in Andalusia, Tahar Sidi, the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] Front has repeated its threat to the participants in the Paris-Dakar-Paris rally when they enter the Western Sahara. Tomorrow, the rally arrives in Spain and the stage ends in Granada. In the opinion of the Polisario Front, not even the Moroccan Army will be able to eliminate the danger posed by the mines on the Sahara's frontier with Mauritania.

[Madrid RNE-1 Radio Network in Spanish at 2316 GMT on 28 December added the following report: "For almost a month the Polisario Front has been warning of the danger of the Paris-Dakar-Paris rally passing through the Western Sahara. While initially the organizers of the rally turned a deaf ear to the warnings, and it was even said that there was no kind of threat, stark reality has drawn their attention to what is no longer either a threat or a warning, but rather a serious and firm declaration that cannot be shrugged off, a declaration such as that made in Granada by Tahar Sidi, spokesman for the Polisario Front in Andalusia:

[Begin Sidi recording] The Polisario Front's stance is clear. In our opinion, it is a violation of the cease-fire. In our opinion, it is a territory of the utmost risk and no one can guarantee the security of the caravan of motorbikes, cars, trucks, and hundreds and hundreds of people." [end recording]

Kuwait

Ban on Citizens From 'Adversary' States Denied

LD0401095194 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0840 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Kuwait, 4 Jan 1993, (KUNA)—A responsible source at the public relations department of the Interior Ministry denied today the statements made by a local newspaper, according to which the ministry would not allow nationals of the adversary countries to enter the country, even if relations with these countries were resumed.

In a statement, a copy of which was obtained by KUNA, the source added that the Interior Ministry granted residence permits to a large number of Arab nationals including subjects from the adversary states. It also added that the statements made by that paper were absolutely untrue.

The source also denied that any official had made a statement in this regard and pointed out that those nationals enjoyed all the rights and privileges that other people coming to Kuwait have in accordance with the laws and regulations in force in the country.

The source concluded its statement by stressing that despite the continuation of severance of relations with those states, the concerned bodies at the Interior Ministry were carrying out all dealings concerning those nationals without any exceptional measures.

Last Sunday, a local paper published a statement it attributed to "a responsible source at the Interior Ministry" according to which the ministry would not allow the nationals of adversary countries to enter the country even if diplomatic relations were resumed with those countries.

UN Forces Authorized To Prevent Border Violations

LD0301200494 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] General Krishna Thaba, commander of the UNIKOM [United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission] forces, said that UNIKOM members have authority to use force in order to prevent any violations or sabotage operations across the border area. In a statement to Kuwaiti television, Gen. Thaba said that his forces will set up observation points on the border and will continuously monitor the demilitarized zone. He said they will also carry out random inspections of all cars and vehicles in the area in order to prevent any attempts at sabotage or to stir up any problems.

The UNIKOM commander added that a security trench will prevent any individual attempts on the part of the Iraqi regime to breach these borders.

Oman

Letters on Oil Price Received From Malaysia, Angola

JN0201153994 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1455 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] Muscat, 2 Jan (WAKH)—Sa'id Bin-Ahmad al-Shanfari, Oman's minister of petroleum and minerals, has received a letter from Malaysia's minister of law [title as received] dealing with developments in the oil market.

The minister's letter, according to the OMANI NEWS AGENCY, stresses Malaysia's full support for Oman's effort to coordinate policies between OPEC and non-OPEC members to map out a new strategy to reflect the real value of the crude.

The letter emphasizes that Malaysia will support the measures required to prop up oil prices, and contains an invitation for the Omani minister to visit Kuala Lumpur for a review of oil-related issues.

The Omani minister, meanwhile, also received a letter from his Angolan counterpart addressing cooperation between OPEC and non-OPEC members and stressing the need for coordination to counter declining oil prices.

Message From Bahrain

JN0301152594 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Petroleum and Minerals Minister Sa'id Bin-Ahmad al-Shanfari has received a letter from fraternal Bahraini Development and Industry Minister Yusuf Ahmad al-Shirawi, in reply to the letter his excellency sent to His Excellency Yusuf Ahmad al-Shirawi on falling oil prices and the sultanate's current efforts to contact non-OPEC oil-producing countries in order to cooperate to achieve stability in oil markets and to improve prices from their current low levels.

In his letter, al-Shirawi noted appreciation for the Sultanate of Oman's concern over the current oil market and also pointed out that he supported the sultanate's views on factors that have led to the decline of oil prices.

Bahraini Development and Industry Minister Yusuf Bin-Ahmad al- Shirawi also invited Sa'id Bin-Ahmad al-Shanfari to visit Bahrain to hold consultations on the declining oil prices and the best ways to assess the course and trends of oil prices in line with the contents of the final statement issued by the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] summit held late last month. The GCC member states had agreed to contribute to efforts to reduce oil production if all the OPEC and non-OPEC countries agreed to an overall plan to reduce production in a balanced manner.

Qatar

Registration of Iranian Nationals Discussed

LD0301093594 Tehran IRNA in English 0810 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Jan. 3, IRNA—Issues related to registration of Iranian nationals residing in Qatar were discussed in a meeting between Qatari Interior Minister Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Khalifah Al Thani and Iran's Deputy Interior Minister 'Ali Akbar Rahmani Sunday [2 January].

Rahmani who is also head of the Civil Registration Organisation arrived here from Kuwait. He is presently on a tour of the Persian Gulf littoral states to examine the issues related to Iranians residing in these countries.

Meanwhile, Iran's Ambassador to Doha Seyyed Baqer Safa'i, in a meeting with the special advisor to the amir of Qatar, Shaykh Mohammad Bin-Hamad Al Thani Sunday handed over a message of head of Iran's Mostazfin (oppressed) Foundation Mohsen Rafiqdust.

The message dealt with mutual ties and ways to expand Tehran-Doha relations, Rafiqdust invited the advisor to visit Tehran which was accepted.

Saudi Arabia

Government Issues Decrees Endorsing National Budget

LD0101211994 Riyadh SPA in English 1930 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Riyadh, Jan 1, (SPA)—Three royal decrees have been issued endorsing the national state budget for the fiscal year 1414/1415 H.

The first decree No. M/14, dated 19/7/1414 H issued in accordance with articles 72, 73, 76 and 78 of the government system and articles 25, 26 and 27 of the Council of Ministers' system, and according to the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 85, dated 19/7/1414 H, estimated the state's revenues and general expenditures for the fiscal year 1414/1415 H at SR [Saudi riyals] 160 billion.

The royal decree also included the regulations for the implementation of the budget.

The second decree No. M/15, dated 19/7/1414 H issued in accordance with the Council of Ministers resolutions No. 86 dated 19/7/1414 H estimated the municipalities and water departments' budget for the fiscal year 1414/1415 H at SR 5,269,800,000.

The Third Decree No. 16/M dated 19/7/1414 H issued in accordance with the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 87 dated 19/7/1414 H endorsed the budgets of the general organisations whose budgets are attached to the state's general budget.

The 22 general organisations include the general ports authority, the Saudi Arabian Airlines Company (Saudia), the general electricity organisation, the general organisation for flour mills and grain silos, the General Saline Water Conversion Corporation, the general railways organisation, Petromin, the Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu, Saudi Arabian Standards Organisation, King Sa'ud University, King 'Abd-al-'Aziz University, King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals, Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University, the Islamic University of Medina, King Faysal University, Umm al-Qura University, the general organisation for technical education and training, King 'Abd-al-'Aziz City for Science and Technology, the Institute of Public Administration, the Saudi Red Crescent Society, the general organisation for military industries, and the pensioners fund.

The total budget estimated for these organisations for the fiscal year 1414/1415 H amounts to SR 28,387,493,000.

Furthermore, the government specialized credit institutions shall extend easy-term, interest-free loans to citizens working in the fields of agriculture, industry and real estate.

Total loans to be extended by these institutions are estimated to reach SR 7,870,000,000 during the new fiscal year.

New Budget Detailed

LD0101214994 Riyadh SPA in English 1938 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Riyadh, Jan 1, (SPA)—The custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz has approved the new budget for the fiscal year 1414/1415 H which begins on the 18th of Rajab 1414 H (corresponding to December 31, 1993) for twelve months.

The Ministry of Finance and National Economy is therefore pleased to comment on the current economic position and the financial program for the coming year. First: The general financial position:

The fiscal year 1413/1414 has witnessed a noticeable reduction in the international oil prices, and as the principal source of the government revenue, oil represents seventy five percent (75) of the total government income.

This reduction has affected the growth rate of GDP which was tentatively estimated at 1 percent for 1413/1414 even though it will be revised as soon as the final data becomes available. However, if we look at the private sector, the results are different since its growth rate was estimated at 5.1 percent for 1993.

This growth rate is good and confirms the continued expansion of the private sector as well as the continued

increase in the absorptive capacity of the national economy as a result of investments that took place in recent years.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that one of the main reasons for this improvement in the growth of the private sector was price stability. The consumer price index remained low, indeed, for the last month of 1993 it was 1.8 percent, in comparison with the same month of 1992. This is a very low rate compared to what is prevailing in most countries. Second: Appropriations for the new fiscal year 1414/1415

1- as a result of a continually weak international oil market, the revenues and expenditures of the new fiscal year were estimated at one hundred and sixty thousand million riyals (SR 160,000,000,000). The size of the new budget is less than last year's budget by 20 percent. This level of public expenditure is made to be in line with the expected incomes from oil for the next year.

2- The appropriation for the ongoing mainienance and construction projects in the new budget is estimated at forty three thousand million riyals (SR 43,000,000,000).

3- The development funds will continue to provide loans to the private sector's activities, which will be seven thousand, eight hundred and seventy million riyals (7,870,000,000) during the next fiscal year.

Yemen

King Husayn To Attend 'Reconciliation Ceremony'

JN0401120694 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 4 Jan 94 pp 1, 20

[By Ahmad Shakir]

[Excerpts] Amman—Yemeni Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah has said that the Yemeni Government and people are looking forward to His Majesty King Husayn's blessing of the national reconciliation between President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid. "*le* explained that it is premature to set a date for this reconciliation, but added it will take place within the next few weeks, and no later than the end of this month.

In a telephone statement to AL-DUSTUR yesterday, Basindwah said that immediately after his return from his recent visit to Jordan, Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister Brigadier General Mujahid Abu-Shawarib briefed the Yemeni Council of Ministers on the results of his meeting with His Majesty King Husayn. Abu-Shawarib also conveyed to the Council of Ministers his majesty's extreme interest in maintaining the scared Yemeni unity and the accomplishments that have been achieved so far. [passage omitted]

Asked whether other Arab leaders will attend the reconciliation ceremony, the Yemeni foreign minister said that His Majesty King Husayn will be the only sponsor at the historic meeting. He said King Husayn had a key role in containing the crisis because he is respected, appreciated, and loved by the Yemeni president, vice president, and people. [passage omitted]

In another development, AL-DUSTUR has learned that a grand official and popular ceremony will be held at the al-Jund Mosque in Ta'izz before the end of this month. The ceremony will be attended by the Yemeni president, vice president, and all official and popular leaders to vow at the home of God to resolve problems and maintain the sacred Yemeni unity.

Ministries' Moves Reveal Government 'Split'

PM3112132993 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Some Ministers' Moves Perpetuate Split in Yemeni Government"]

[Excerpts] Sanaa-London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Political circles in Sanaa have confirmed the existence of an undeclared split inside the Yemeni Government, which they consider an extension of the split developing in the Presidential Council and the House of Representatives as a result of the political crisis the country has been experiencing since August.

The circles' proof of the existence of the undeclared split is that one ministry does not know what another does, and that some Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] ministers are trying to free themselves from the so-called "Sanaa grip," especially as some of these ministers have for several weeks been living in Aden and other southern governorates.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah has confirmed the statement attributed to a Foreign Ministry official to the effect that the ministry had no prior knowledge of the Omani oil minister's visit to Hadhramaut last Sunday [26 December]—a visit during which he held talks with Yemeni Oil Minister Salih Abu-Bakr Husaynun.

The official newspaper AL-THAWRAH published this statement yesterday, saying that the Yemeni Foreign Ministry had received a memorandum from the Omani Embassy, seeking assistance to allow the "private" plane carrying the Omani minister to land at al-Riyan airport in Hadhramaut.

The statement also said that the ministry had known nothing about the visit, and the same applies to Transport Minister Salih 'Ubayd Ahmad's travel to Cairo to attend the Arab transport ministers' conference. Sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the statement in question was made in reply to Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas statements about the two visits when he "confirmed" the Foreign Ministry's knowledge of them.

A General People's Congress source has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the oil and mineral resources minister and the transport minister (who represent the YSP in the present coalition government) did something unusual. The source added: It is logical and natural for all foreign contacts with fraternal or friendly states to be conducted via the Foreign Ministry, because it is the country's main contact channel, as is the case in all states. [passage omitted]

Sources following the situation have linked what happened to recent reports about continued attempts by a number of YSP ministers, especially those who have for several week been living in Aden, to free themselves from "Sanaa's grip."

The sources said that these ministers' nonparticipation in regular government meetings since the Aden meeting held in October—even though most of these meetings are chaired by Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas—is evidence of their wish to make their own independent decisions, be it with regard to internal policies concerning their ministries or even matters concerning Yemen's relationship with other states. [passage omitted]

Al-'Attar Optimistic About Political Crisis, Economy

JN0101145594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1225 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Sanaa, 1 Jan (INA)—Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-'Attar, Yemeni deputy prime minister and industry minister, has said he is optimistic that the current political crisis in Yemen will end soon, and that the country's economic situation will improve.

In press statements published in the Yemeni newspaper AL-THAWRAH today, al-'Attar said the political crisis has affected the economic situation in Yemen. However, detente will come, he added.

Al-'Attar disclosed that Yemen's foreign debts total $1.5 billion. This sum includes $4 billion [as received] for former southern Yemen and $1.5 billion for northern Yemen prior to Yemeni unity. The Government of Yemen is currently holding negotiations with former East European and Soviet states in order to reschedule Yemen's debts to them. He pointed out that, apart from these debts, Yemen only has very limited loans to repay.

Al-'Attar criticized the policies of the Arab countries that invest funds abroad. He indicated that many international firms are operating with Arab capital. Trade cooperation between the Arab states and Europe has increased to 95 percent, while it is only about 3 percent among the Arab countries, al-'Attar explained.

Arab League Envoy Protests Airspace 'Violations'

JN0401142594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1010 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (INA)—Iraq has informed the Arab League that the rulers of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have continued to provide facilities for U.S., British, and French aircraft violating Iraqi airspace, noting that this poses a serious threat to Iraq's security and sovereignty.

Iraq's Arab League representative said that during 27-31 December these aircraft continued to violate Iraqi airspace, taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and conducted 258 aggressive sorties.

Iraq's representative enclosed a list detailing these violations to inform the Arab League member states of these regrettable facts.

UN Envoy Lodges Protest

JN2912125893 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] Iraq has informed the United Nations that U.S. aircraft violated its airspace from 10 to 20 December for surveillance purposes and provocation. A protest note sent to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali said the aircraft mounted 745 sorties in south and north Iraq, flying at various altitudes and speeds.

An American reconnaissance plane, TR-1, violated the Iraqi airspace in the southern parts of Iraq and then headed for Saudi Arabia.

Saddam Sends Greeting Cables to World Leaders

Message to PLO's 'Arafat

JN0101122994 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1142 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 1 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has sent a congratulatory cable to Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, on the national day of the sisterly state of Palestine. The cable reads:

On the anniversary of the launching of the Palestinian revolution, the national day of the sisterly state of Palestine, I am pleased to extend my greetings to Your Excellency, wishing you good health and happiness and wishing the Palestinian Arab people success in achieving their national objectives. Peace be upon you.

Message to Sudan's al-Bashir

JN0101112094 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0950 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 1 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has sent a congratulatory cable to his brother Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, president of the Republic of Sudan, on the national day of sisterly Sudan.

The cable reads: On the national day of the sisterly Republic of Sudan, I am pleased to extend to Your Excellency my heartfelt greetings and brotherly feelings, wishing Your Excellency good health and happiness and wishing the fraternal Sudanese people continuous progress, strength, and prosperity. I hope that fraternal relations between both our people and our sisterly countries will witness further development and growth for the wellbeing of our glorious Arab nation. Peace be upon you.

Message to Cuba's Castro

JN0101123294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1143 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 1 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has sent a congratulatory cable to Fidel Castro, chairman of Cuba's Council of State and president of the Council of Ministers, on the national day of his country. The cable reads:

On the 35th anniversary of the victory of the Cuban revolution, the national day of the Republic of Cuba, I am pleased to extend to Your Excellency, on behalf of the people of Iraq and on my own behalf, our heartfelt greetings, wishing you good health and happiness and wishing the Cuban people greater progress and prosperity. I also hope that our friendly bilateral relations will witness continuous development and growth for the interest of our friendly peoples.

Radio Views Upcoming al-Asad-Clinton Summit

JN0101111794 Baghdad Voice of Arab Syria in Arabic 0730 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Unattributed feature: "Today's Talk"]

[Text] Dear listeners, sons of our people in wounded Syria, and Arab brothers everywhere: On 16 January, Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton will meet in Geneva to conclude a once-in-a-lifetime understanding between America and Hafiz al-Asad. Immediately following the Geneva meeting, Christopher or some other senior American official will begin shuttle trips between Damascus and Tel Aviv make arrangements for implementing the proposed agreement between al-Asad and Clinton in preparation for signing an agreement or peace and cooperation treaty between al-Asad and Rabin. These arrangements will include 1) coordinating bilateral talks in Washington; 2) raising the level of those negotiataing so that al-Shar' will meet with Shim'on Peres; 3) preparing for holding a summit meeting between al-Asad and Rabin in Cairo, Washington, or elsewhere; and 4) resorting to secret talks again in order to resolve the problems that cannot be solved in public bilateral talks.

It seems that Hafiz al-Asad seeks an effective American role in the next talks. Why? He wants to achieve greater American sponsorship within the framework of his

attempts to reinforce his local, regional, and international position, both on political and economic levels. He wants America to help him improve both his domestic and Arab image. He also wants America to guarantee the implementation of his coming agreement with the Zionist because, as he believes, America is an unbiased and effective mediator. He also believes that in the coming stage, America would give him a distinguished role, one higher than the position of other parties that held talks with the Zionist in Madrid and Washington, particularly the PLO.

Hafiz al-Asad believes that through this approach, he will gain America, and if he gains America, he will receive some material and political privileges that he could not achieve through face-to-face talks with the Zionists; in other words, he wants to reach Israel via America, not the opposite. He also wants America alone to help him obtain European and Western assistance. Moreover, he wants America to help him obtain Gulf assistance and donations.

This does not mean that eventually Hafiz al-Asad will not announce his (?submission to Zionism) which has become a fact, because his agreement with America and his concessions, for the sake of America, will be in the interest of Israel. Normalization is in the interest of Israel. Joint, bilateral, regional, and international cooperation on political, security, and economic levels is in the interest of Israel.

Hafiz al-Asad is eager to gain what al-Sadat and Yasir 'Arafat have gained. He maneuvers, however, to achieve this over a longer period and for a higher price, or so he imagines.

UK's Archer To Address Kurdish Parliament

NC0401161694 Paris AFP in English 1535 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Zakho, Jan 4 (AFP)—Lord Archer arrived Tuesday [4 January] in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq where he will address the breakaway parliament and deliver a message from Prime Minister John Major, an AFP correspondent reported.

Lord Archer, better known as the novelist Jeffrey Archer, arrived at the head of an eight-member delegation including Catherine Royal, head of the Foreign Office's Iraq desk. They plan to stay in the region for five days. He will address the parliament in Irbil on Wednesday and deliver a message from Major, whose contents he did not disclose. The delegation was staying Tuesday at the allied military coordination centre in Zakho.

Lord Archer said he wanted to see how the situation in Kurdistan had developed since his last visit a year ago, and to discuss aid. The Kurds set up their own government and parliament in northern Iraq after the Gulf war and are protected by allied warplanes patrolling an "exclusion zone" closed to President Saddam Husayn's aircraft.

Opposition Says Ba'th 'Spies,' Official Executed

LD0301205994 Tehran IRNA in English 2035 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Dezful (Khuzestan) Jan. 3, IRNA—Two Ba'thist spies and a government official of that country were executed by opposition forces in Iraq last week.

An Iraqi opposition source said here Monday that the two secret agents of the Baghdad regime were captured by the people in Umm al-Shuyukh region of Qurnah near al-Basrah.

The executed government official, he said, was in charge of the political bureau of the ruling Ba'th Party of Iraq in al-Basrah.

Opposition Urges Caution in Dealings With U.S.

JN3012172693 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1600 GMT 30 Dec 93

[Text] Damascus, 30 Dec (SANA)—The Iraqi Islamic bloc, which opposes the Iraqi regime, has stressed its desire to bring down the Baghdad regime and set up an alternative regime in a united Iraq that respects the rights of all parties. In a statement issued today, the Islamic bloc noted the need to defend the unity of Iraq's people and entity as an objective in the interests of all parties in Iraq. The Islamic bloc called for rejecting any plans or policies that would fragment or divide Iraq.

The statement calls for the setting up of an alternative regime in Iraq that respects human rights, particularly the right to free expression, as stipulated in all laws, religions, and international charters.

The Iraqi Islamic bloc added that America wants to use the Iraqi opposition to pressure the Iraqi regime, if this regime hesitates to carry out its orders. The bloc added that America will hint to the Iraqi regime that the opposition will be the alternative if that regimes rebels against it. America, the bloc said, will only enable the opposition to topple the Baghdad regime if it finds that it is more capable of achieving its interests.

The Islamic opposition called on the forces of the Iraqi opposition to be alert and cautious in their dealings with the United States.

Central Bank Denies Plan To Devalue Dinar

JN0201201994 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] Iraqi Central Bank Governor Tariq Talib al-Takmaji has denied the tendentious rumors circulated by hostile sources on Iraq's intention to take steps pertaining to the Iraqi currency's value.

In a statement to an IRAQI NEWS AGENCY correspondent, the governor said: Recently, there have been tendentious rumors circulated by hostile propaganda sources. These rumors are aimed at undermining the

legendary steadfastness of the good Iraqis who have proudly stood fast for three and a half years under an unfair and cruel embargo, which was imposed by the forces of evil and tyranny. These forces are still boasting about their defense of human rights.

Al-Takmaji added: These rumors include reports on the Iraqi currency. Some parties alleged that there is an intention to replace the present currency with another currency worth one-tenth the present currency's value. The evil ones also say that the state will possess 90 percent of the public's balances deposited in the Iraqi banks, as well as other vicious rumors.

Al-Takmaji continued: These rumors—which are circulated by familiar trumpets whose approaches are well known—are not reasonable, and I vehemently deny all these rumors. I also affirm that there is no intention to influence the legal value of the Iraqi currency or change its denominations, knowing that there are rumors that claim that the government intends to devaluate the dinar to one-tenth of its value.

He added: On this occasion, I would like every citizen to thoroughly examine these rumors. After our perseverance for more than 40 months, the dinar cannot be devaluated to one-tenth, and the people can be assured about their deposits in the banks.

Al-Takmaji continued: Some people who circulate these rumors try to compare Iraq with some former Soviet states or some East European states. However, such a comparison should not be made, and these people know this fact better than others do. Even if these people cite the current exchange rate of the dinar, they are also well aware that this exchange rate does not reflect the dinar's real value; it is only a reflection of a situation dictated by temporary circumstances. This situation will inevitably change when the embargo ends, God willing.

Paper Views Release of Assets in European Banks

JN3012200793 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 27 Dec 93 p 4

[By Dr. 'Isa al-'Isa]

[Text] Baghdad—AL-JUMHURIYAH has officially confirmed its report that four European countries have indeed released our assets frozen in their banks. AL-JUMHURIYAH's report was identical with that of the Central Bank of Iraq. A responsible source said: "Yes, some countries have released Iraqi assets after receiving the approval of their monetary authorities. These countries are Switzerland, Spain, Greece, and Austria."

In response to a question from AL-JUMHURIYAH, the source said that Iraqi assets had been frozen in the banks of several Western, developing, and even some Arab countries. He added that the assets were deposited as current accounts to cover import expenditures and that there were other deposits in U.S., British, and German banks.

Regarding new measures for controlling the circulation of the U.S. dollar and other hard currencies in the market or on the street, the source said: On 7 November 1993, the Council of Ministers decided to establish limited companies to work as brokers for buying and selling foreign currencies in order to stop the confusion that has prevailed since the authorities permitted the possession and circulation of foreign currencies in Iraq. The instructions allow the company to use up to 10 percent of its capital for this purpose. During the first stage, these companies will confine themselves to foreign banknotes, rather than dealing with other forms of payment; the dealings will be based on immediate, rather than delayed payment; and the company's commitment to sound dealings and to extending its services to its clients will make the process successful and have positive effects on trade and other economic activities.

Asked whether there are new instructions on transporting national and hard currencies in and out of Iraq, the source said that the current measures take into account the current circumstances facing Iraq as a result of the unjust blockade imposed on it and that the lack of foreign currency has affected efforts to meet the needs of the local commodity and service markets.

On the instructions of the Political Command, the Central Bank of Iraq has tried to ease the pressure on foreign currency by taking measures to cover basic consumer needs and to increase the demand for the Iraqi dinar on foreign markets, thus affecting its exchange rate against foreign currencies in parallel markets. The following measures were taken:

1. To allow arrivals to Iraq to bring with them the sum of 1,000 Iraqi dinars per person.

2. To allow Iraqis to bring in Iraqi currency from abroad on condition it is declared on foreign transfer form No. 8 and an account is opened with this currency at a licensed bank. Withdrawals from these accounts are not permitted for a two-year period from the date of deposit. These accounts will receive the 15 percent interest rate enjoyed by similar deposits.

3. To allow Arab citizens to bring in their capital in Iraqi dinars for investment purposes in industrial and agricultural projects designated by the Ministries of Industry, Agriculture, and Irrigation. Iraqi dinars brought in for this purpose will be considered as operating capital and expenses for the projects contracted and without any obligation to transfer the profits.

4. In implementation of President Saddam Husayn's directives on 13 July 1992, it was decided to allow citizens to make withdrawals and deposits in their foreign currency bank accounts without restrictions and without their being asked to declare the source of these foreign currency funds.

5. In line with Paragragh No. 4 above, it has also been decided to suspend the provisions on outside transfers

that required banks be contacted for selling purposes and for all provisions dealing with the possession of foreign currency.

6. Iraqis who have accounts outside Iraq are permitted to bring these funds into Iraq and open accounts in licensed Iraqi banks or to use these accounts to import basic foostuffs.

When AL-JUMHURIYAH asked about the measures to combat inflation, the Central Bank source said that the Iraqi economy during the period preceding the 30-state aggression against Iraq had come close to a balanced economy. But, the aggression and the unjust economic blockade have been a major reason for the spiralling inflation the Iraqi money market is experiencing.

Saddam Orders Increased Allowances for Minors

JN0201190694 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Excerpt] President leader Saddam Husayn has ordered that the allowances given to the dependent minors of pensioners be increased from 200 to 300 dinars. A responsible source at the Ministry of Justice has stated this to an IRAQI NEWS AGENCY correspondent. The source added that the ministry made efforts to improve the department's performance in the care of minors eliminating unnecessary steps in the paperwork. This paperwork is usually monitored by those guardians who oversee the minors. The new procedures are meant to facilitate things for the minors and to assist in processing their application forms as quickly as possible, he noted.

The source added that this department implements the task of caring for minors, preserving their rights and funds, and investing their money in a way that achieves the best revenues. He pointed out that the minors' balance totals 1.0003 billion dinars. [passage omitted]

Saddam Allocates 49 Million Dinars to South

JN0201192394 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 29 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] Al-Basrah—President leader Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, has ordered that 49 million dinars be allocated to Saddamiyat al-Qurnah and al-Faw, the city of sacrifice and the gate of the great victory, accordiang to al-Basrah Governor Latif Mahal Humud. He said that this generous act on the part of the leader is in line with his excellency's previous good deeds for the city of cities [al-Basrah].

It is noteworthy that the share of Saddamiyat al-Qurnah from this allocation is 35 million dinars, whereas the share of al-Faw totals 14 million dinars. In the name of the residents of the valiant al-Basrah, the al-Basrah governor renewed the pledge of love for our militant leader Saddam Husayn, may God protect him.

Oil Minister Informs Saddam of Repair of 2 Tankers

JN0401145394 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1400 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 4 Jan (INA)—It was announced here today that the two oil tankers, al-Ba'th and al-Khalidah, have been repaired by the mujahidin of the Iraqi Oil Tankers Company and their mujahidin comrades from other oil companies and establishments in a record time.

The announcement was made in a cable President Saddam Husayn received from Oil Minister Safa' Hadi Jawad, who informed his excellency that the two oil tankers have been repaired. [passage omitted]

Information Minister on Reopening of Gulf Port

JN3012124293 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 30 Dec 93 pp 1, 16

[Text] Baghdad—Iraqi Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi has praised the brotnerly ties between the Jordanian and Iraqi peoples. He said the Iraqi people will always recall with fondness and appreciation the Jordanian people's support during their calamities, both in the Iraq-Iran war against the racist hostile current and in the Mother of Battles when forces of evil and aggression massed and more than 30 barbaric, treacherous states assembled to strike at Iraq.

In an interview with the AKHBAR AL-USBU' editor in chief, Hammadi said the reopening of Umm Qasr port in the Gulf will not affect the transportation of Iraqi imports and continued commercial activity via al-Aqabah Port. He said Umm Qasr port was operational during the Iran-Iraq war but this did not affect the flow of goods to Iraq via al-'Aqabah port in Jordan.

The Iraqi information minister said: The reopening of Umm Qasr port confirms Iraq's right to make the appropriate decisions and repair everything destroyed by war. It also confirms Iraq's determination to break the chains of the blockade imposed against it. The decision to allow imports via Iraqi ports will also encourage major shipping companies to ship directly to Iraq to unload the goods that are allowed to be imported.

Hammadi underlined Iraq's strong desire to continue to receive its imports via al-'Aqabah port, particularly the imports shipped by big vessels with a load capacity of over 30,000 tonnes. He said even after repairing and expanding the port, and overcoming the silt problem, Umm Qasr port can only receive vessels with a load capacity between 20,000 and 30,000 tonnes, particularly those arriving from Pakistan and India. The distance from these countries to Umm Qasr port, he said, is shorter than that to al-'Aqabah.

The information minister said certain shipping companies are worried about sending their vessels to Umm

Qasr because they think the area between al-Bakr harbor and Umm Qasr port is dotted with mines and because of higher insurance costs.

Hammadi also talked about the Iraqi Government's positive attitude toward former British Prime Minister Edward Heath and other European figures who visited Iraq recently to secure the release of prisoners. He said: These people who wagered on the collapse of Iraq and who thought that its capitulation was only a matter of time have come back to show repentance and admit that the regime is strong and so is Iraq.

He added: We cannot turn back those people, who, we think, have begun to understand the suffering of and injustice inflicted on Iraq and the effect the blockade is having on its people. We responded favorably to them on humanitarian grounds and we hope they will make their voices heard to their governments and to the officials and people in their countries in the hope that awareness may move to end the injustice and repression against Iraq.

The Iraqi information minister praised the good relations between the Iraqi and Turkish peoples. He said: We sensed from the brothers in Turkey—including party, professional, and trade union leaders and parliamentarians—only sincere feelings toward us. We have trade links with Turkey. We expect an increase in trade links between the two countries through the thousands of trucks that enter Iraq with foodstuffs. They barter these goods for gasoline and kerosene, which they take to sell in Turkey. We hope these convoys will continue to supply particularly foodstuffs and medicine, to help lessen the burden on the Iraqi people that is caused by the blockade,

Hammadi adds: Some 50,000 people live in the Diyarbakir area. Cafes, restaurants, hotels, and resorts can be built on a 120-km stretch of road to serve drivers and truck convoys. It is expected that between 17,000 and 20,000 trucks loaded with goods, particularly rice and legumes, will enter Iraq daily. Trade links with the Diyarbakir area date back more than 50 years and Iraq used to import legumes, particularly good quality peas, from that area.

Asked about his expectations on the resumption of Iraqi oil exports via Turkey, Hammadi said: Al-Bakr harbor, which extends 25 km into the sea, is ready to receive tankers and export oil. The harbor was repaired and made ready for work two years ago. As for exports via Turkey, Turkey alone can answer this question and determine the date.

Asked about lifting the unjust blockade and Iraq's compliance with the UN resolutions, and whether there were still any requests which Iraq has to fulfill, the information minister said Iraq has implemented all UN Security Council resolutions. He said it is time now to lift the blockade imposed on Iraq and we expect matters to become clear in February.

Asked about recent U.S. moves to secure a UN Security Council resolution calling on Iraq to recognize Kuwait and stop action against the opposition, Hammadi said: We understood from UN envoy Ekeus that there are no appendices or new conditions to the UN Security Council resolutions, which introduced and maintained the sanctions against Iraq. We will have to wait and see what they say in the next meeting which, as I have said, will be held in February. The blockade will, God wiling, erode; this is only a matter of time.

At the conclusion of the interview, Hammadi said he is proud of the position of Jordan—king, government, and people. He asked us to convey his greetings to the Jordanians, whose blood was mixed with the blood of the Iraqis.

Britain's Hurd Arrives 3 Jan for Two-Day Visit

Says Not To Play Intermediary With PLO

TA0401055694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd has arrived in Israel for a brief two-day visit. Speaking at the airport upon his arrival last night, Hurd said he hopes to hear about the ongoing peace process, but he did not bring with him any new proposals. Dani Gur-Arye reports:

[Begin recording] [Gur-Arye] Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd flew from Beirut to Ben-Gurion Airport last night for his first visit to Israel in three years. He was greeted by Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, who said Israel is eager to brief Britain on the latest developments in the peace process.

Secretary Hurd said relations between Israel and Britain had been strengthened over the last three years. He said the Middle East peace process had gained a certain momentum, and there was no going back on what had been achieved.

Hurd was asked if he is bringing to Israel proposals to help get the talks with the Palestinians back on track.

[Hurd] I don't wish to suppose or lead you to suppose that I have in my suitcase some bright ideas on these subjects. No, that is not our role; that is not our role. If from time to time we can facilitate....[pauses] I've just had a fascinating dinner in Beirut with the three Lebanese presidents [as heard], and I will discuss that aspect also tomorrow. Maybe from time to time one can facilitate understanding, but I wouldn't put it higher than that. On the economic side, of course we are very interested in how the Israel-PLO agreement develops and how it broadens out. So that side certainly, but I wouldn't certainly cast myself in any kind of role of intermediary.

[Gur-Arye] Hurd also said he hopes to discuss other issues with the Israeli leaders, including Israel's trade policy with the EC. The British foreign secretary is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Rabin today. He said he would also meet with family members of Israel's MIA's. [end recording]

Peres, Hurd Comment on Talks

TA0401120294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has again indicated that the Taba negotiations with the Palestinians can be resumed only on the basis of the Cairo understandings. At a news conference in Jerusalem, Peres said the Cairo document was agreed upon by both sides, and if the PLO rejects it, it must clarify on what basis the talks can continue. Peres was speaking at a news conference with visiting British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. Jack Katzenell reports:

[Begin recording] [Katzenell] Foreign Minister Peres rejected Yasir 'Arafat's charge that Israel is trying to humiliate the Palestinians. We respect the Palestinian leadership and opposition, Peres said, but he insisted that there was a meeting of minds in Cairo on all the major issues, and this, he said, is what the document reflects.

[Peres] I didn't say that they have automatically to accept it, but if they reject it, they have to ask themselves: What will be the basis of negotiations? Why do they negotiate? And what they have rejected are points that we have agreed upon.

[Katzenell] Peres said the Gaza and Jericho arrangement which Israel is offering the Palestinians will not be a Bandustan, as Yasir 'Arafat has charged, since it will not be the end of the story. On the contrary, in a few months Israel will begin negotiations on extending the autonomy to the rest of the territories, Peres said.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd had talks with Peres for about an hour this morning. Hurd said Britain has a passionate interest in the success of the negotiations between Israel and the PLO. It is not easy to reconcile Palestinian dignity with Israeli security, Hurd conceded.

[Hurd] So I do not think it is surprising that there are difficulties and setbacks. I just feel, as an outsider and well-wisher, that all those concerned are perhaps in the middle of a river, but they have passed the point where it is easier to go back then to go forward. It is actually rather easier to go forward—although difficult—than to go back and start all over again. I am sure that is perceived here; I hope it is also perceived by the PLO.

[Katzenell] Douglas Hurd said Israel took a courageous and difficult step when it signed the Declaration of Principles and recognized the PLO. He would recommend the most liberal terms possible for Israel when it negotiates its new economic agreement with the EC. [end recording]

Peres Rejection of PLO Demands 'Not Final'

TA0301192894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has assured the PLO that it will have the opportunity to again raise demands now being rejected by Israel in the Gaza-Jericho First negotiations. The foreign minister is urging the Palestinians to allow implementation of self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho and to put off their demands that have stalled the talks until negotiations begin on the fate of the rest of the West Bank. David Ze'ev reports:

[Begin recording] [Ze'ev] Contacts between Israel and the PLO can happen at any moment these days,

including twice by phone as Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was briefing the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. Palestinian negotiator Nabil Sha'th was on the other end. A Knesset official at the closed-door committee meeting referred to the second phone conversation as relatively long, lasting several minutes. Members of the media followed Peres when he slipped into a side room after the committee meeting ended. The foreign minister said there was nothing to report, at least in public:

[Peres] Nothing for the public knowledge yet.

[Ze'ev] But Peres made it clear that Israeli rejection of at least certain Palestinian demands is not final. The PLO has been told by Israel: Let's get the Gaza-Jericho First self-rule arrangements moving and then you may raise the demands again.

[Peres] There were requests that were rejected, and Chairman 'Arafat returned to them. Actually we told the Palestinians: Look, this is not the end of the story. We do not understand 'Arafat's claim that this is a Bantustan, because in a matter of several months we are going to continue the negotiations about other parts of the West Bank. So actually what they are claiming is not land, but wasting time [sentence as heard]. In due course we shall continue the negotiations. It is not a closed story.

[Ze'ev] Inside the committee room the foreign minister is said to have insisted that Israel will not compromise on controlling security at the border crossings into Jordan from the Jericho area, and into Egypt from Gaza. Peres said the Palestinians have withdrawn their demand for an international force. But in response to a question, Peres did not rule out that Jewish settlers could be uprooted, though he said it would be an internal Israeli decision, not in the shadow of the negotiations. And on the upcoming summit between U.S. President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafiz al- Asad, Peres said despite the high hopes in the United States for dramatic progress, he has his doubts. [end recording]

Peres Calls on Palestinians To Honor Agreements

TA0401083094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has called on the Palestinians to start discussing the issues agreed on in Cairo, because when agreements are made, they should be honored.

Speaking to our correspondent Sheli Yehimovich this morning, Minister Peres said that although 'Arafat has the right to reject the Cairo agreement, this rejection leads to the conclusion that a meeting would be pointless.

He added that Palestinian rivalries are hurting the main goal of advancing toward peace, which should be put before squabbles. Mr. Peres noted that Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], head of the Palestinian delegation, is the one who should have spoken about the Cairo agreement, but after confirming the existence of the agreement in a television interview, Abu-Mazin became mute and Nabil Sha'th took the floor.

Referring to Knesset Member Dalya Itzik's proposal to give up the Qatif Bloc in exchange for the Palestinians' agreeing to reduce the Jericho area, Minister Peres said he is categorically opposed to this.

Foreign Ministry Official on PLO Negotiations

JN0301182794 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 1 Jan 94 p 3

[Interview with Yoel Zinger, Foreign Ministry legal adviser, by Ruba al-Husari in Jerusalem—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Husari] There have been conflicting Israeli and Palestinian assessments of what has been agreed on in Cairo. Why?

[Zinger] We approved a document in Cairo last Tuesday. It was close to an agreement. Now, we are trying to obtain the Palestinian and Israeli leaders' approval of that document. Despite certain statements, we have received signals that the Palestinian reply would not be "Yes" or "No," but "Yes, but." The Egyptian side is exerting great efforts with President Yasir 'Arafat. Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, his adviser Usamah al-Baz, and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa told us in the presence of the Palestinian delegation that they would try to make the agreement possible. The main idea was that if 'Arafat's reservations on the document were rather positive, 'Amr Musa would visit Israel to try to persuade us to accept the Palestinians's reservations. We have presented our concept to the Palestinians in 108 pages under the headline: "The Israeli Proposal: Agreement on Gaza Strip and Jericho Area," dated 22 December 1993, and the Palestinians presented their concept in a similar file. We are now trying to come out with a unified, acceptable concept.

[Al-Husari] When will the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement be signed?

[Zinger] We are now discussing four subjects defined by Yitzhaq Rabin and Yasir 'Arafat to be solved before other subjects. They are:

1. Foreign security along borders with Egypt and Jordan.
2. Crossing arrangements on border points.
3. The size of the Jericho area.
4. Other issues pertaining to the size of settlements in the Gaza Strip. [passage omitted]

[Al-Husari] Yitzhaq Rabin said that he was not sure about Israeli withdrawal by 13 April. Is that surprising?

[Zinger] He is right. The Declaration of Principles stipulates that the implementation will begin immediately after signing the Gaza-Jericho agreement, and that we will still have four months to go, starting from the date of

the signing in order to complete the withdrawal. If we do not end the negotiations within four months, the withdrawal will be postponed. If we do not sign, no withdrawal will take place. However, I believe we can reach an agreement and sign it by mid-April.

[Al-Husari] It is clear to everybody that Yasir 'Arafat needs a quick agreement. Is Israel in a hurry too to reach such an agreement?

[Zinger] I do not know if we are in a hurry. We have made commitments and we want to comply with them as soon as possible. We must expect a delay of a few weeks or months, but this situation must not drag out further since the agreement risks meeting the same fate as that of Camp David. We wanted to negotiate with the PLO because it was facing problems and was about to disappear. We realized that it was in nobody's interest for it to disappear and for Israel to remain alone facing several organizations, none of which is able to speak in the name of all the Palestinian people and to impose itself on them. Therefore, a further delay in implementation of the agreement could lead not only to the PLO's disappearance, but also to its collapse. This is in nobody's interest. [passage omitted]

[Al-Husari] You were quoted as saying at the meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee that the military rule will remain the source of power in the self-rule areas. What does this mean?

[Zinger] In the Declaration of Principles we agreed to dissolve the civil administration and end the military rule, but without dissolving it. The powers that will not be transferred to the Palestinians will remain in the hands of the military rule. The headquarters of the military rule will be located anywhere outside the self-rule area in Gaza. The work of the military rule will focus on the affairs of the settlements and the Israelis.

[Al-Husari] Will the military rule continue to issue military orders as the case has been since 1967?

[Zinger] I do not know. The military rule might issue orders related to settlements, such as preventing the Israelis from entering Gaza. And the only way to do this is through military rule. The military rule might also issue orders related to external security. The important thing is that, theoretically, we are not talking about independence. Therefore, we will not abolish the military rule and will not completely end Israeli control.

[Al-Husari] Will you maintain military rule because you think there will be a need to return to the occupied territory one day?

[Zinger] If I can read the Israeli Government's mind well, I think Israel does not want to return to Gaza at all. On the contrary, it might fear that one day this will be its only choice if the Palestinian police force fails to carry out its duties. We might be forced to do something we hate to do. We want to leave the Gaza Strip and never go back to it. Another situation might emerge if a large-scale war breaks out in the region.

[Al-Husari] Does this apply to the West Bank?

[Zinger] The situation in the West Bank is very complicated. For this reason, we are only talking about Gaza first. There are many differences between Gaza and the West Bank. In the West Bank, we are facing on the eastern front countries, who are still in a state of war with Israel. This situation does not exist in Gaza, because in Gaza there is only Egypt. In Gaza, there are 4,000 Israelis, while in the West Bank there are 100,000 Israelis. We find a solution to the four settlement areas by linking them through one road to Israel. Therefore, the Israelis will use four roads in Gaza only. This, however, will be impossible to apply in the West Bank.

[Al-Husari] Will the final status of the West Bank be different from that of the Gaza Strip?

[Zinger] The answer might be yes and no. In Gaza, there is no water problem, while in the West Bank there is only one water reserve. And in Gaza there are no holy places while in the West Bank there are many holy places some of which are common [to Muslims, Christians, and Jews]. The West Bank is different from Gaza in everything. Therefore, we decided to concentrate on Gaza now and not to think at all, in the current stage, of what is taking place in the West Bank.

[Al-Husari] Have you noticed any difference in the talks with the Palestinians when the negotiators are changed, such as the absence or presence of Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas]?

[Zinger] I believe that the Declaration of Principles could not have been reached in Oslo without Abu-Mazin and Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray']. They were the catalysts within the PLO, and they are the ones who understand the spirit of the Declaration of Principles. When we began talks on the implementation of the Declaration of Principles, neither attended these talks and we found ourselves in front of new people. The problem here is that those new negotiators have to begin from square one and that they sometimes think they can use their skills to improve the Oslo accord. However, since they were not in the operation room when the accord was concluded they do not know its real components because it was ready before them.

Netanyahu: Accord Not To Bind Likud Government

TA0301201894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu says Israel's agreement with the PLO, which was signed in September and approved by the Knesset, will not be binding on him or any government he might lead. He was speaking during a visit to the Jordan Valley moshav Na'ama, some five kilometers north of Jericho. According to the

draft agreement reached in Cairo, Na'ama will reportedly be bordered to the east and to the north by the Palestinian autonomous zone. In Na'ama today was reporter Dick Winter:

[Begin recording] [Winter] Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu dropped his bombshell after Na'ama members accused him of selling them out, when in September after the Knesset approved the Israel-PLO accord, he pledged then that the Likud would honor the agreement if they came to power. Now, says Netanyahu, the situation has changed:

[Netanyahu] Agreements are made to be abided by, but that cannot be a unilateral action. In fact, the PLO has already violated the central tenets of the agreement. It hasn't canceled the PLO charter, as it promised; it hasn't espoused an antiterror policy. What it has done, in fact, is the very opposite. So if the PLO violated this agreement, I don't see why we should be bound by it. In all international law, an agreement that is not kept by the other side does not bind the other signatory. That is the common thing. Contracts are not one-sided. If one side violates, it doesn't oblige the other, and in this case the PLO has clearly violated this agreement completely, eviscerated it of any meaning, abrogated it central tenets, and therefore I will not see this agreement as binding on a government that I would lead.

[Winter] Addressing the Na'ama settlers, most of whom were Rabin supporters in the last elections, Netanyahu said he couldn't believe that the Labor Party, much less the Likud, could support an agreement which reportedly leaves Na'ama bordered to the east and to the north by the Palestinian autonomous zone. As to his program, this is what the Likud leader had to say:

[Netanyahu] I think what we have to see is an alternative plan that gives autonomy to the Palestinian Arabs in their cities and their villages and gives Israel control over security. Security for Israel, autonomy for the Arabs, and not a PLO state that would perhaps fast become the bridgehead for another war against Israel.

[Winter] Displaying to reporters the document including what he said were the latest Israeli proposals to the Palestinians—but not giving many details—Netanyahu said they were a blueprint not for autonomy, but for a Palestinian state. [end recording]

Military Judge on Support of PLO Against Hamas

TA3012135993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 30 Dec 93

[Text] Brigadier General Ilan Schiff, the military judge advocate, says Israel is interested in strengthening the PLO's position in its struggle with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. For this reason Israel must sometimes implement moves which are aimed at having long-term effects.

Our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i says that Brig. Gen. Schiff was referring to the government's decision to release security prisoners. The military judge advocate emphasized that Israel's present policy is not to release prisoners with blood on their hands. Brig. Gen. Schiff spoke at a Criminology Association conference at Bar Ilan University.

Minister Aloni on Self-Rule, Accord With Jordan

NC0401110794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0603 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—Shulamit Aloni, Israeli minister of sciences and communications [title as received], has emphasized that Egyptian diplomacy has played a magnificent role in bringing the views of those involved in the Middle East crisis closer so that peace and prosperity can prevail in the region.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM today, Tuesday, she said: As a sign of goodwill, we gave Egypt a map with details of the huge resources that are hidden under the Sinai sands, but we found out that Egypt has a similar map and knows everything about the Sinai's resources.

She expressed pleasure at the telephone links between Israel and all the Arab countries and noted that any citizen in any Arab country can talk directly to anyone in Israel.

On the failure of starting the planned Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, she said: We are actually ready to implement our obligations in the Gaza-Jericho Accord and for the Palestinians to begin to handle their affairs in the self-rule areas by themselves. But she noted differences in views on this issue between the government, which wants peace, and others who do not want peace, as she put it.

She said she accepts giving up all the territories occupied after the 1967 war and that the Palestinians have the right to establish their state in the West Bank and Gaza. However, she remarked that this is not the government's view.

Replying to a question on reports that Israel and Jordan have reached an unannounced peace agreement, she said that an agreement in principle has actually been reached with Jordan and that King Husayn is awaiting developments in the negotiations with Syria before announcing the agreement.

The Israeli minister said negotiations with Syria will begin very soon. She affirmed Israel's readiness to give up the Golan if President Hafiz al-Asad is willing to establish a genuine peace.

Ben-Eli'ezer Inaugurates Golan Housing Project

TA0401110594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Touring the Golan Heights this morning, Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer said that the government has neither formulated stands nor held debates in anticipation of President Clinton's meeting with President al-Asad in 10 days in Geneva, although informal contacts between top Washington echelons and Israeli leaders may have taken place in preparation for the meeting.

He told our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling that the government will not announce its intentions with regard to the Golan in advance, but neither will it avoid difficult decisions, and when required to decide whether and how much to cede, it will do so. He asserted that the Golan was conquered because of security considerations alone and that the government will not negotiate on it until Syria realizes that our security and very existence constitute the essence of our presence on the Golan.

The construction and housing minister inaugurated a new housing project in Qatzrin today. The project consists of 500 housing units, most of which have been sold. Replying to reporters questions, Minister Ben-Eli'ezer said the inauguration of the project and his tour of the Golan 10 days before the Clinton-al-Asad summit have no political significance. He noted that the tour was planned three months ago and that the government will continue to aid in the development and expansion of the Golan settlements.

Academics Meeting May Mean New Syrian 'Attitude'

TA3112065493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 31 Dec 93

[Text] Itamar Rabinovich, the Israeli ambassador in Washington, does not believe the discussions of Israeli and Syrian academics regarding a possible arrangement on the Golan Heights will accelerate or facilitate the official negotiations on this issue, which are slated to resume in Washington in about one month.

Ambassador Rabinovich told our correspondent in Washington Arye Golan, however, that the fact that over the last year the Syrian regime has permitted some of its citizens to meet Israelis for the purpose of discussing the peace proce[illegible] another sign pointing at a change in Syria's attitude. Ambassador Rabinovich said that this can be seen as a sign of the seriousness with which Syria regards the negotiations with Israel.

Visa Agreement Signed With Portugal

TA3012202293 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 30 Dec 93

[Text] Israeli citizens visiting Portugal will no longer need visas. Portuguese citizens visiting Israel will also not require visas. The Portuguese ambassador and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres signed an agreement to this effect today.

Gur Promises Settlers Territorial Contiguity

TA0201152694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur visited the settlement of Na'ama north of Jericho this afternoon, and promised inhabitants of the Jordan Valley there will be territorial contiguity along Israel's eastern border. Our settlement affairs correspondent Gil Litman reports that Gur's meeting with the settlers was unpleasant and raucous and that he could barely make himself heard. They leveled bitter complaints against the government and voiced anxiety over their personal safety if the village of al-'Awja is included in the future autonomy.

Border Police Capture 2 'Terrorists'

TA0101182994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Border Police tonight captured two armed terrorists after a clash in the Jabalyah refugee camp. The police opened fire. One terrorist was lightly injured, and the second arrested. The injured terrorist was taken to a hospital.

Earlier, security forces noted a suspicious car in Gaza City. A revolver and a Carl Gustav rifle were found inside. The three passengers in the car were detained for questioning.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1200 GMT on 1 January reported that "six local residents were wounded when soldiers opened fire to disperse rioters in Palestine Square in Gaza."

[The report adds that processions and rallies were held in Gaza, Khan Yunus, Bethlehem, and Ramallah to mark the 29th anniversary of the foundation of Fatah.]

Army Reportedly Kills 3 Palestinians in Gaza

NC0301202494 Paris AFP in English 1906 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Gaza City, Occupied Gaza Strip, Jan 3 (AFP)—Israeli troops on Monday [3 January] shot and killed three Palestinian teenagers in the occupied Gaza Strip, Arab sources said.

Troops fatally shot Fadil Ibrahim Rihan, 19, in the mouth after he threw stones at an army jeep patrolling the Jabalyah refugee camp, while elite troops shot 'Abbas Khadir al-Sa'idi, 18, in the al-Shati' camp, they said.

Taxi driver Ibrahim Abu-Dan told AFP that he saw soldiers, who were looking for Palestinians who had fled in a Peugeot 404 car, first wounding al-Sa'idi and then finishing him off with a second shot.

Farid Sha'rawi, 19, was killed by a bullet which penetrated his abdomen when Israeli soldiers opened fire in the al-Shati' camp at demonstrators showering them with stones.

Tension was clearly mounting in Gaza Monday night despite a curfew which takes effect every evening as of 8:00 p.m. (1800 GMT), the same sources said.

These deaths bring to 1,163 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli bullets in the occupied territories since the uprising erupted six years ago, according to an AFP toll.

Also on Monday, Palestinian sources here said Israeli troops have arrested two members of PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat's Fatah faction who are suspected of murdering two Israelis last week.

In a raid Sunday on the Gaza Strip's Khan Yunus refugee camp, they arrested Farid al-Qaysi, 21, and 'Ala Abu-Sita, 20, on charges of killing alleged drug dealers Hayim Weizmann, 34, and David Bublil, 41, near Tel Aviv last Friday.

The two were reportedly seen writing on the main Khan Yunus mosque that "the Ahmad Abu-Rish group carried out the murder of the two Zionist dogs at al-Ramlah to avenge the army's killing of Ahmad Abu Rish."

Al-Qaysi, Abu-Sita and two other Palestinians who were at large had shown camp residents four ears they said they had cut from their victims, Palestinians said.

Undercover Israeli troops shot dead Ahmad Khalid Abu-Rish, a 20-year-old member of the Fatah Hawks, on November 28, shortly after he had been set free from prison.

The Hawks vowed afterwards to resume their armed attacks which they had abandoned on Arafat's orders following the September 13 autonomy accord.

The army also arrested Muhammad Abu-Rish, a former member of the Islamic Jihad movement who had been pardoned at the same time as his brother Ahmad.

Soldiers also raided the al-Burayj camp and arrested Yasir Taha, 20, a member of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qasim, the armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

IDF Lifts Roadblocks, Stops Fatah Manhunt

TA0201115194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 2 Jan 93 p A3

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The IDF has removed most of the permanent roadblocks which were set up in the West Bank following the imposition of the closure on the territories a year ago. Senior military sources have said that more than 20 roadblocks were removed. The IDF forces in the West Bank currently employ a method of placing ad hoc roadblocks. The permanent roadblocks in Jerusalem were left in place. [passage omitted]

[A report by ITIM correspondent Dani Zaqen on page 1 of Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew on 2 January adds: "Political sources in Jerusalem and the PLO leadership have officially confirmed an ITIM report from last week according to which the security forces completely ceased hunting Fatah terrorists in the territories, including those who committed murders of Israelis and Palestinians." The report goes on to say that "senior military elements" have expressed opposition to this move, saying that "it delivers a death blow to the IDF deterrence power." HATZOFE adds that "this opposition has been relayed to the IDF command and through it to the prime minister, and it has been learned that Rabin is currently considering rejecting or postponing the move."]

Knesset Approves 1994 State Budget

TA3112055793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 31 Dec 93

[Text] The Knesset late last night passed the state budget for 1994. The vote was 62 in favor, with SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim], United Torah Judaism, and the Arab Democratic Party giving their support to the Labor and Meretz coalition. Forty-four opposition Knesset members voted against the budget, and two members of HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] communists abstained.

Summing up the budget debate, Finance Minister Avraham Shohat said next year Israel will have to find solutions for the large expenses resulting from the peace process.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks

Musa To Meet With King, Officials

JN0301102994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa arrived in Amman this morning on a brief visit to the Kingdom, during which he will meet with His Majesty King Husayn and senior officials. He will hold talks with them on the latest developments in the peace process, several current Arab and international issues, and fraternal bilateral ties.

On arrival in Amman, the Egyptian minister said that he is carrying a message from His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak to his brother His Majesty King Husayn on the latest developments in the peace process.

Musa Received by al-Majali

JN0301132494 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] The Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has received at his office the Egyptian Foreign Minister Mr. 'Amr Musa.

During the meeting, they reviewed relations between the two fraternal countries, and developments in the peace process, as well as current international issues.

The meeting was attended by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Talal al-Hasan and the Egyptian ambassador in Amman.

Mr. Musa, who arrived in Amman this morning on a brief visit to Jordan, is also due to hold talks with his majesty the king and other senior officials on the Middle East peace process and several Arab and international issues, as well as bilateral relations.

In an arrival statement, Mr. Musa said he was carrying a message to his majesty the king from Egyptian President Husni Mubarak dealing with the peace developments. He also said the message deals with relations between the two brotherly countries, and is part of their consultations and coordination, particularly at this delicate phase of the peace process in the region.

Asked about inter-Arab relations, the Egyptian foreign minister said he hoped the beginning of the new year will witness a breakthrough in inter-Arab relations. He added there is no need to expedite efforts to restore these relations to normal, particularly that the special circumstances which the Arab region has recently passed through barred the improvement of such relations.

On Israel's rejection to return to the Taba talks with the Palestinians unless the PLO accepts the Cairo document as a basis for these negotiations, Mr. Musa said there was more than one paper and one document which the Israelis and Palestinians agreed upon. He pointed out that these papers or documents should be submitted to the leaderships concerned to approve, reject, or amend them; and this should be the basis for negotiations.

Mr. Musa said there is room for agreement or disagreement on these points, or on some of them, and for reaching solutions.

The Egyptian foreign minister described the proposed meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton due to be held in mid-January as an important one which will expedite the peace process in the region.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal al-Hasan welcomed Mr. Musa's visit to Jordan, saying it is part of the brotherly relations between the two countries, and constitutes an important development in the Middle East peace process. Mr. al-Hasan said the continued coordination and consultations between the Jordanian and Egyptian leaderships at this particular phase is an important and vital matter.

King, Musa Discuss Peace Process

JN0301161894 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa at the Royal Hashemite Court today. His Highness Crown Prince Hasan attended the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the peace process and its latest developments. The meeting emphasized the importance of contacts and coordination between all Arab parties concerned with the peace process in order to participate in ending the occupation and assisting the Palestinian brothers in the occupied Arab territories in a manner that secures their rights within the framework of comprehensive, just, and lasting peace.

The meeting was attended by Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, prime minister; al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, Royal Hashemite Court chief; Marwan al-Qasim, the political adviser to his majesty the king; and Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs.

Egyptian ambassador in Amman Ibrahim Wajih Hamdi also attended the meeting.

Musa Notes 'Fruitful' Talks With King

JN0301174694 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Excerpts] His Majesty King Husayn received Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa at the Royal Hashemite Court today. His Highness Crown Prince Hasan attended the meeting. [passage omitted]

Talal al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, and 'Amr Musa praised the results of the Jordanian-Egyptian

talks held in Amman today. They emphasized the importance of these talks in developing bilateral cooperation and bolstering bilateral and Arab coordination in order to unite the Arab position.

This has come in press statements made by the two ministers at the Amman Airport before the Egyptian foreign minister left Amman today at the end of a short working visit to Jordan.

Al-Hasan described the meeting between His Majesty King Husayn and the guest minister as cordial and fruitful, and said the meeting reviewed bilateral relations in general and ways of developing them. The peace process as a whole and each of the tracks were also discussed.

He said it was agreed during the Jordanian-Egyptian meetings to support bilateral coordination and Arab coordination in general in order to realize higher Arab interests. The minister emphasized the importance of the Arab economic coordination as complementary to the political coordination. He said: During 'Amr Musa's visit to Jordan talks addressed activating bilateral economic relations and convening a meeting for the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee, led by the prime ministers of both countries in order to discuss developing bilateral cooperation in all fields as an enhancement to bilateral economic cooperation.

'Amr Musa described his visit to Amman as fruitful and successful. He said: I was honored to meet with His majesty King Husayn, and I conveyed to his majesty a message from his brother His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. The meeting was very good and long talks were held on the peace process—its past, present, and future—the importance of Arab coordination on this issue, and the other tracks of the peace process. Talks also dealt with bilateral relations and means of developing them, and it was agreed to hold a meeting of the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee. [passage omitted]

Musa Denies 'Any Pressure' Put on PLO

JN0301205394 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held talks with his majesty the king and other Jordanian officials on Middle East peace during a brief visit to the Kingdom. [passage omitted]

Musa told reporters before he left Amman that he conveyed to his majesty a message from President Husni Mubarak, and that he had a long discussion with his majesty on the past, present, and future of the peace process, in addition to bilateral ties.

He said he agreed with Jordanian officials to convene a meeting of the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Cooperation Committee.

Musa voiced hope that Arab relations could be reconciled, and called for speedy efforts to heal rifts among Arab states. Musa said his country's mediation had not yet succeeded in breaking the deadlock between Israel and the PLO over the implementation of the Palestinian autonomy document.

He said he expected further delay before PLO and Israeli negotiations could resume on ways to implement the self-rule deal. He said the Taba talks will resume very soon despite the stalemate which he described as not very serious.

He added that Egypt would not exercise any pressure on the PLO.

[Begin recording] [Musa] There is no pressure on the PLO by us. We listen to what the PLO leaders have to say. We try to help when our help is needed, and when we are called upon to help, but there is nothing at all that would pertain to, or be construed as pressure on the PLO.

[Reporter] Isn't it true that in fact agreement was reached in the last Cairo talks? What's your position on that?

[Musa] I believe there will be a meeting of the Gaza-Jericho committee, the liaison committee in Taba soon I hope, and therefore, it is not a question of what happened or what took place. The important thing is what should take place from now on. [end recording]

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal al-Hasan also told reporters that Jordan and Egypt agreed to move ahead with strengthening bilateral cooperation.

King Husayn, Mubarak Discuss Arab Solidarity

JN3112064293 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 31 Dec 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency [Egyptian] President Husni Mubarak have exchanged views regarding current Arab issues, the peace process, the latest developments in this process, and ways to reinforce Arab solidarity and unify stands. This came during a telephone conversation yesterday evening.

Qatari Foreign Minister Pays Official Visit

Al-Hasan on Improved Qatari Ties

JN0101105394 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 1 Jan 94 p 1, 22

[By Nabil Ghazzawi]

[Excerpts] Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Sat'an al-Hasan has emphasized that Jordan, under His Majesty King Husayn's leadership, highly evaluates the Jordanian-Qatari relations, and said this evaluation stems from both the heart and mind.

Answering a question posed by AL-DUSTUR on the official two-day visit to Jordan today by His Highness Shaykh Hamad bin-Jasim Al Thani, foreign minister of sisterly Qatar, al-Hasan said we view bilateral relations with respect and sincere desire to develop them. [passage omitted]

Al-Hasan said the State of Qatar has informed the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states of the progress of Jordanian-Qatari relations, which have begun to positively and substantially improve, and that the GCC states highly valued this development.

The minister said the two countries agree that moves should be made to foster Arab cohesion, and that this can develop through bilateral or trilateral cooperation and through joint cooperation. He said this cooperation could be elevated to reach a comprehensive and full reconciliation. [passage omitted]

Qatari Foreign Minister Arrives

JN0101132994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani arrived in Amman this afternoon on a two-day visit to Jordan, during which he will hold talks on bolstering bilateral relations and the Arab situation.

On a statement to reporters on arrival, the Qatari minister said:

[Begin recording] [Al Thani] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. I am grateful for the warm reception by the brothers in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Of course, the visit comes within the framework of the long-standing fraternal bilateral relations. Today's visit aims to bolster this position, and if there is any misunderstanding or anything else to place things in a sound framework—a framework of brotherhood and cooperation, and within the framework of realizing Arab solidarity [sentence incomplete as heard].

[Reporter] Your Excellency the Minister, what is the State of Qatar's view on Arab solidarity?

[Al Thani] We have stated several times that Arab solidarity is a necessity. If there is something to be discussed, in my view we can discuss it face to face as Arabs, and there is no need for estrangement. We should speak face to face and put things on the right track.

[Reporter] Are you carrying a message to his majesty the king from his highness the amir?

[Al Thani] Of course, I will convey the greetings of his highness the amir and his highness the heir apparent to his majesty the king and His Highness Prince Hasan. At the same time, I will convey a verbal message.

[Reporter] Your Excellency, would you sum up Qatar's position on the peace process, especially concerning holy Jerusalem?

[Al Thani] Since the very beginning of this problem with the Israeli occupation of Palestine, the State of Qatar has been adopting a clear position. Qatar supports the brothers, whether in Palestine or other Arab countries that were harmed by the [Israeli] occupation in 1967. We support the Palestinian people's peace understanding which they reached with Israel. It is a Palestinian affair, and we only support the brothers, whether in peace or in other conditions—we support them with the capabilities available to us.

[Reporter] What about holy Jerusalem?

[Al Thani] Of course, this is the first of the two qiblas, and it is important to us as Muslims. We do not want to see Jerusalem remain in non-Islamic or non-Arab hands. [end recording]

For his part, Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, said:

[Begin al-Hasan recording] I would like to point out the good and fraternal relations between Jordan and Qatar. These relations are long-standing and are developing, praise be to God. His Majesty King Husayn and his brother His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani have been eager to bolster these relations in various fields and on various levels. Undoubtedly, the visit of my brother and friend Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Al Thani to his country and kinsfolk in Jordan will bolster and develop these relations. The visit will surely lead to a qualitative shift concerning the implementation of all agreements and protocols annexed to them, which undoubtedly will foster fraternal relations. This is not restricted to the bilateral field. The visit of his excellency the minister will constitute a shift toward bolstering Arab ranks and Arab solidarity, which we hope to be in its best shape, God willing. [end recording]

Prime Minister Receives Al Thani

JN0101145194 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali today received in his office at the Prime Ministry Qatar's Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani and his accompanying delegation.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed distinguished relations between the two fraternal countries and means to develop and reinforce these relations in all fields, expressing concern for the need to rebuild Arab solidarity based on trust and mutual respect. They discussed the peace process in the region and stressed the importance of the comprehensiveness of the solution, taking into consideration the restoration of occupied Jordanian territories and Jordan's right to water.

The guest minister stressed the uniqueness of relations between the two countries. He described these relations as ancient, reaffirming his country's support for Palestinian decisionmaking.

The meeting was attended by Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs; Tirad al-Fayiz, Jordan's ambassador to Qatar and Nasir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Nasir, Qatar's ambassador in Amman.

King Receives Al Thani

JN0101215494 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn this evening received at Raghadan Palace Qatar's Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, in the presence of His Highness Crown Prince Hasan. During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on various regional and international issues and relations between the two fraternal countries and means to reinforce and develop these relations in various fields. Moreover, they stressed the need to achieve Arab solidarity and to consolidate efforts in this field to serve the one Arab nation's issues and the future of its generations. The two sides also reviewed the latest developments in the peace process and the need to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Attending from the Jordanian side were Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, the prime minister; al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; Marwan al-Qasim, his majesty's political adviser; Talal al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs; and Tirad al-Fayiz, Jordan's ambassador to Qatar.

Attending from the Qatari side were members of the accompanying delegation and Nasir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Nasr, Qatar's ambassador in Amman.

His Majesty King Husayn awarded the Qatari foreign minister the al-Kawkab medal, first class.

The guest minister, the accompanying delegation, and those attending had dinner with His Majesty King Husayn.

Foreign Ministers Hold Talks

JN0201081394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] The Jordanian side, led by Talal al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, and the Qatari side, led by His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, Qatari foreign minister, held a round of talks this evening.

They reviewed the fraternal and distinguished bilateral relations between the two fraternal countries and peoples, established by His Majesty King Husayn and his brother His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, amir of the State of Qatar.

The two sides emphasized the importance of developing and fostering bilateral cooperation in all fields, and agreed to form a joint committee headed by minister of state for foreign affairs and the Qatari foreign minister to activate and follow up the development of bilateral relations in various fields in light of His Highness Crown Prince Hasan's visit to Qatar last August, and the subsequent exchange of visits by ranking officials of both countries. The joint committee will meet alternately in the capitals of the two countries. It was agreed that the first meeting will be held in the Qatari capital in the first quarter of this year.

The meeting reviewed details of various bilateral agreements and executive programs in the fields of cultural cooperation, manpower, vocational training, exchange of expertise, health, environment, press exchange as well as exchange of programs and news dispatches, transportation and airfreight, and gas.

Special emphasis was placed on the exchange of visits between the chambers of commerce of the two countries and the private sector, facilitating the travel of businessmen to the two countries, and encouraging investment and cooperation in the banking field.

Reviewing Arab developments, the two sides emphasized the importance of bolstering solidarity and the unity of Arab ranks in a manner that preserves the Arab nation's interests and realizes its objectives.

Al-Hasan explained the developments of the peace process, and emphasized Jordan's firm commitment to this process, both in its bilateral and multilateral talks, in accordance with the constants and principles on which the peace process was established. These constants and principles are the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the exchange of land for peace, the Palestinian legitimate rights on the Palestinian national soil, restoration of Arab rights in land and water, a solution to the problems of the refugees and displaced persons in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy, and full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, including holy Jerusalem. He emphasized that Jordan is committed to a comprehensive solution on all tracks with the aim of reaching a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region.

The minister summed up the economic difficulties and challenges Jordan is facing, and referred to the blockade imposed on al-'Aqabah port and the subsequent losses to the Jordanian economy. He also explained the democratic march in Jordan and the recent parliamentary elections.

The guest minister expressed gratitude and appreciation for the warm reception he and his delegation were accorded, and emphasized the depth of fraternal bilateral relations, and the eagerness of the State of Qatar to bolster and develop these relations within the framework of bolstering Arab solidarity. The minister hailed Jordan's role in the peace process and emphasized his country's support for the peace process in a manner that secures restoration of Arab rights and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people on their national soil, in

accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the principles on which the peace process was set up.

The two sides reviewed a number of Arab, regional, and international issues of mutual concern, and exchanged views on them.

The meeting was attended by the delegation accompanying the guest minister, secretaries general of the Foreign Ministry and Industry and Commerce Ministry, the Jordanian ambassador to Qatar, Qatari ambassador in Amman, and a number of Foreign Ministry officials.

Crown Prince Confers With Al Thani

JN0201144794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan this morning received Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani. They examined ways to foster relations between the two brotherly countries. Prince Hasan and Shaykh Hamad also discussed Arab affairs and how to revive joint Arab action considering the current circumstances prevailing in the world.

This morning, the two called at the military general headquarters. Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, was on hand to welcome them. He briefed them on regional developments from a military angle and on the Jordanian military's role regionally and globally, noting its participation in peacekeeping operations around the world. Crown Prince Hasan and the Qatari minister were accompanied by Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, Jordan's minister of state for foreign affairs; 'Abd-al-Rahman Bin-Hamad al-'Attiyah, ambassador at the Qatari Foreign Ministry; and the ambassadors of Qatar in Amman and Jordan in Doha.

End Urged to 'Misunderstanding' With Iraq

JN0201170194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] Amman, 2 Jan (INA)—Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani, the foreign minister of Qatar, has called for an end to the mistake or misunderstanding that took place with Iraq.

Replying to a question posed by the INA correspondent today during a news conference held in the Jordanian capital, Amman, the Qatari foreign minister pointed to Qatar's role in [the attempts] to lift the embargo being imposed on Iraq. He said: Iraq is an important part of the Arab homeland. We believe that this mistake or misunderstanding should be removed and that positive results should be achieved in this regard, he added.

The Qatari foreign minister said that his country's diplomatic relations with Iraq were maintained before and after the Gulf crisis, adding that these relations are not new.

Shaykh Hamad Al Thani emphasized Qatar's policy on international and Arab issues. He said that Qatar believes in working toward regaining inter-Arab relations and creating clear Arab cohesion in the current phase. He also stressed the need to close all files on the problems that obstruct such cohesion.

Joint News Conference Held

JN0201171094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, the minister of state for foreign affairs, and Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani, the Qatari foreign minister, today held a news conference at al-Hashimiyah Palace. During the news conference, the two sides spoke about the issues they discussed during their meetings and the results of the Qatari minister's talks in Amman. Details are in the following report:

At the outset of the news conference, Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, the minister of state for foreign affairs, welcomed the Qatari minister, stressing the similarity in the viewpoints of the two fraternal countries on various issues discussed during the visit. The Qatari foreign minister thanked His Majesty King Husayn and His Highness Crown Prince Hasan for the warm reception he received during his visit. He said:

"I would like to express my deep thanks to His Majesty King Husayn and his highness the crown prince for the warm reception my accompanying delegation and I have received. Moreover, I thank his majesty for the medal he has awarded me. This is a great honor for me and for the brothers accompanying me during this visit.

"As for the nature of the talks, of course, there were special talks between Qatar and Jordan and there were special talks about Arab cooperation and reunification. Moreover, there were talks that dealt with some international issues, especially the peace process and what is taking place on this course. We discussed these issues with total frankness and a logic that should prevail in our inter-Arab relations.

"Of course, I conveyed a message from his highness the Amir [of Qatar] and received a reply from His Majesty King Husayn that falls within the context of the cooperation and ancient brotherly relations between the two.

"The current higher joint committee will organize all the actions to be taken with respect to previous agreements. There is no reason why a visit by Qatar's heir apparent to Jordan should not take place in return for His Highness Crown Prince Hasan's visit. We are with Jordan whether his highness the crown prince visits Qatar or the Qatari heir apparent visits Jordan, as it is his second country."

Asked about the role that Qatar could play to clear the Arab atmosphere, the Qatari foreign minister said:

"In fact, the relations should be clear from the beginning and all Arab countries should be frank with each other, not in order to defame one another but to overcome any crisis and misunderstanding and to surpass difficulties and the crises the Arab world faced recently.

"There is no doubt that Qatar is a small country. However, we hope that we will play a role that is not aimed at achieving any kind of victory but at clearing the Arab atmosphere. This is because we, the people and government of Qatar, believe that there can be no victory for the Arabs except through their unity. If we wanted to look back on the past, we would recall that Arab unanimity during the 1973 war was achieved because of frank Arab solidarity. All our victories were achieved through our solidarity, while all our problems and tragedies have been due to division and to the method of dealing which, we believe, should not prevail among Arab countries."

Asked about Jordanian-Qatari relations, in general, the Qatari foreign minister said:

"These relations, as I said earlier, are ancient relations. Our relations with Jordan were not affected at any time. There is no doubt that a misunderstanding took place during the recent Gulf crisis and the occupation of Kuwait. We believe that we should overcome this misunderstanding despite how it took place. This misunderstanding should be overcome and taken as a lesson for our future as an Arab nation. We should stand alongside right under any circumstances. This is what Qatar is hoping for."

For his part, Talal al-Hasan, the minister of state for foreign affairs, summed up the results of the visit by saying:

"At the end of this positive visit, which I hope will be repeated and will lead to more visits between the two countries, I would like to say that it was a successful and fruitful one. During this visit, we reached constructive agreements which, without a doubt, will have a positive reflection on relations between the two countries and will yield good results that will push the course of bilateral relations forward. I can very clearly tell you that understanding was very evident during all our meetings and that the identity in views was tangible in all the meetings that were held during this visit by his excellency the minister and his accompanying delegation.

"This visit gains its uniqueness not only from the fact that it comes at this particular time, but also from the nature of the issues that were discussed during this visit and the great similarity in the views the two countries' leaderships hold on these issues. This is in addition to the two leadership's joint understanding of the need for serious and continuous action to correct the Arab situation in order to maintain Arab rights and protect this nation's higher joint interests.

"It was natural for us to take this opportunity to discuss the various circumstances that face our nation, including Arab relations, the peace process, and the changes which regional and international developments impose on all of us.

"Bilateral relations occupied an important part of our talks as we proceeded from a determination by His Majesty King Husayn and brother His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, the amir of Qatar, to strengthen these relations and develop them in various fields until they reach the required level of strength and firmness. This determination was expressed during His Highness Crown Prince Hasan's visit to Doha last August and during this visit.

"I am pleased to note that we reached an agreement on a practical formula that represents a mechanism to follow up the growth and development of bilateral relations in various fields by forming a joint committee at the foreign ministerial level. This joint committee will meet periodically in the capitals of both countries for this purpose. The committee's first meeting will be held during the first quarter of this year in Doha, God willing.

"Moreover, we reviewed in detail the various agreements that organize bilateral relations."

Statement Issued on Minister's Visit

JN0201172994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 2 Jan 94

["Text" of joint statement on the visit to Jordan by Qatar's foreign minister issued in Amman on 2 Jan—recorded]

[Text] Inspired by His Majesty King Husayn's and his brother His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani's wish to see a reinforcement of bilateral relations, based on complete confidence and brotherly joint cooperation between the two brotherly states, a high-level Qatari delegation led by Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, the foreign minister of Qatar, paid a visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan at the invitation of Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, Jordan's minister of state for foreign affairs, from 1 to 2 January, 1994.

The esteemed Qatari guest called on His Majesty King Husayn and His Highness Crown Prince Hasan and held talks with the prime minister. During these meetings, views were exchanged on the close relations between the two brotherly states and how to reinforce them in the best interests of the two brotherly peoples.

The two sides also reviewed the progress made in the Middle East peace process and Arab and international developments.

His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani and His Excellency Talal Sat'an al-Hasan and their delegations held talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on bilateral ties and cooperation, as well as agreements reached between the two countries. Agreement was reached to create a joint committee cochaired by the two countries' foreign ministers to oversee the

implementation of the agreements signed between them and to enhance bilateral relations. The two sides agreed that the committee is to meet once annually in either of the two countries, with the first meeting set for the first quarter of 1994 in Doha.

The two sides surveyed developments in the Gulf region, stressing the importance for security and stability there to be consolidated and kept free of any threats, taking into consideration the principles of international legitimacy and the need for the states of the region to respect each other's sovereignty and to be bound by the principle of the peaceful resolution of any disputes.

The two sides reviewed the peace process and the efforts exerted to reach a just, comprehensive, and durable peace that guarantees the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories, the head of which is holy Jerusalem. They expressed their commitment to the continuation of efforts to reach a peaceful solution based on implementing Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the land-for-peace principle and securing the Palestinians' legitimate rights on their national soil until the Arab rights to territories and water are achieved and the problem of the refugees and displaced is solved in compliance with the resolutions of international legitimacy.

The two sides exchanged viewpoints on the situation in the Arab arena. They expressed the great importance of restoring Arab solidarity and the unity of Arab ranks and of adopting the principle of frank dialogue and mediation or resorting to international law as a better policy to resolve disputes in the Arab arena in order to maintain the interests of the Arab nation and reinforce and deepen trust among all Arab parties.

During their review of developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the two sides condemned the inhuman massacres and acts of mass killing and ethnic cleansing against the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They called for an end to these massacres and urged the international community to shoulder their responsibility. They also called for a fair implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy in order to serve the issues of peace in the world.

The guest minister expressed his admiration and appreciation for the awakening, development, and accomplishments in Jordan in all fields thanks to the wise policy adopted by His Majesty King Husayn.

At the end of the visit, Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani, the Qatari foreign minister, expressed his deep thanks for the warm reception he and his accompanying delegation received. He hoped for progress and prosperity in the brotherly bilateral relations.

The Qatari foreign minister also extended an invitation to Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, Jordan's minister of state for foreign affairs, to visit Qatar. Al-Hasan thankfully accepted the invitation and promised to respond to it soon.

Al Thani Departs After 2-Day Visit

JN0201192094 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani, the Qatari foreign minister, left Amman today at the end of a two-day visit.

Cabinet Briefed on Musa, Al Thani Visits

JN0401140194 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] The Council of Ministers met under Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali this morning. It reviewed Arab and domestic activities that took place in the Kingdom during the past few days, particularly the results of yesterday's visit to Jordan by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

The JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY has learned that the prime minister explained to the council that during this visit, the negotiating position on all fronts was reviewed, with an emphasis on the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations in Cairo, which were held with an Egyptian participation to arrive at an agreement on the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho.

Dr. al-Majali indicated that 'Amr Musa explained that there are three major points which are still being negotiated between the Palestinians and Israelis. The first is supervision of traffic over bridges and sovereignty over them. The second is the size of the Jericho region from which the Israeli Army will withdraw. The third point is the security control of border areas which will be evacuated, especially in the Gaza Strip. During the visit, Musa affirmed that contrary to the Israeli Government's allegation, the Palestinian and Israeli sides have not reached an agreement in Cairo, but that a paper was presented by the Israeli side which proposed that the Palestinian side study it and agree on it with competent PLO authorities. During Musa's visit, bilateral relations were also discussed, especially with respect to the meetings of the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee. It was agreed to activate this committee and to convene it under the chairmanship of both countries' prime ministers. In accordance with the regular order of its meetings, the committee will hold its next meeting in Amman soon.

During the session, Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, reviewed the most important results that have been reached on the bilateral level with the Qatari side during Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabir Al Thani's recent visit to Jordan. It was agreed to set up a joint bilateral committee under the Jordanian minister of state for affairs and the Qatari foreign minister to discuss all bilateral issues of interest to the two countries, including economic, political, and media issues, as well as joint investments and cooperation between the private sectors in both countries.

PLO Stand on Economic Accord To Be Respected

JN3012132493 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 30 Dec 93

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] Amman will respect the Palestinian decision on the economic agreement between the two sides. King Husayn's political adviser Marwan al-Qasim told our radio that if the PLO leadership now thinks that there should be a revision or a postponement of this subject, then Jordan can only respect the independent Palestinian decision.

Al-Qasim noted that Jordan's aim behind the agreement, which has been ready for the signature of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat for two months, is to extend assistance and support for the Palestinian people and fill the financial and economic vacuum in the transitional period until the Palestinian side takes over the banking authority.

Al-Qasim recalled that the Jordanian move came in response to a desire expressed by the Palestinians since the beginning of joint coordination which began with the peace process. The agreement was a result of this coordination, he added. Al-Qasim said that the decision to reopen Jordanian banks in the West Bank was made in 1985 within a joint agreement aimed at extending banking services which would have a vital effect on reactivating the economic conditions and enabling the Palestinian people to adhere to their land.

One bank has been operating in the West Bank since 1986, which is the Cairo-Amman Bank. However, since the Israeli-Jordanian economic agreement was signed earlier this month on reopening Jordanian banks in the occupied territories, eight Jordanian banks have expressed interest to operate there.

Bank Governor on West Bank, Gaza Banks Accord

JN3012122593 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 30 Dec 93 p 13

[Report by Ziyad al-Shillah]

[Excerpt] Muhammad Sa'id al-Nabulsi, governor of the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ], has announced that the Jordanian-Israeli agreement initialed in early December on opening branches of Jordanian banks in the occupied West Bank provides a comprehensive umbrella allowing for the possibility of opening branches of all Jordanian banks. The agreement gives the CBJ full responsibility for supervising the work and competence of these banks. He said that Jordan is currently considering another draft memorandum of understanding concerning opening branches of Jordanian banks in the Gaza Strip.

In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y, al-Nabulsi said that the Jordanian-Israeli agreement includes a memorandum of understanding and seven technical annexes. It is now awaiting the approval of the Council of Ministers, which has the right to amend, approve, or cancel the agreement. He asserted that Jordan's aim is to establish a basis for durable and strong Jordanian-Palestinian relations to serve the interests of both sides, confront Israel's measures to permanently link the Palestinian economy with the Israeli economy, and prevent marginalizing Jordan's role both in the economic arrangements for the occupied territories and in the regional arrangements.

Al-Nabulsi pointed out that the agreement will help toward using the Jordanian dinar and Jordanian banking system in the occupied territory to facilitate various economic operations concerning trade movement and the transfer of capital for investment. This will serve Jordanian interests both in exporting to the occupied territories and in reaping the earnings accrued from these investments. The agreement will give the Jordanian banks a new opportunity to give loans and invest their surplus cash, something which will reflect positively on the size of these banks operations and profits. It is expected that the financial and currency markets in Jordan will expand, utilizing the occupied territory's financial deals. This will expand the base of banking and increase the flexibility and efficacy of the Jordanian financial and currency policy.

Al-Nabulsi said that the framework within which work is being done is expected to generate an influx of real revenues and foreign currencies into the kingdom because of the circulation of the Jordanian dinar and the opening of Jordanian Banks in the West Bank.

Al-Nabulsi noted that Jordan had been in constant contact with the Palestinian side concerning the reopening of banks and that they were informed of the negotiations procedure and they urged Jordan to quickly reach an agreement with the Israeli side. He said the agreement on banks realized great progress even before the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles and was in harmony with Jordan's banking and currency role approved in the draft Palestinian-Jordanian draft agreement. Moreover, Jordan responded to the Palestinian side's demands to incorporate in the Jordanian-Israeli agreement a provision invalidating the memorandum of understanding at the end of the Palestinian transitional phase as enunciated in the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles or when the banking and currency powers and responsibilities have been transferred to the Palestinians.

Dr. al-Nabulsi said the most important points in the memorandum of understanding signed by Jordan and Israel are the following:

1. Opening branches of Jordanian banks in the West Bank will take place in two stages. In the first stage, all branches of Jordanian banks closed in June 1967 will be reopened. In the second stage, branches of other Jordanian banks will be opened.

2. Any Jordanian bank wishing to open a branch should obtain CBJ approval before receiving the approval of the specialized quarter in the occupation authority.

3. Supervision of the branches will be organized on the basis of the Basel international agreement on banking, which says that the head office has full responsibility for the branches' credit status and liquidity (in Jordanian dinars).

4. The CBJ will carry out inspection of branches periodically, or whenever there is a need.

5. Dismissing the memorandum of understanding signed by the two parties on 20 August 1986 and implementing the new memorandum of understanding on the branches of Cairo-Amman Bank. Implementation of this memorandum will expire when an agreement is concluded by the two sides, which should take place before the end of the transitional stage as set in the declaration of principles signed by the Israeli Government and the PLO on 13 September 1993, or when the authority and the banking and monetary responsibilities are transferred to the Palestinians.

He said that it is worth noting that the meaning of the area mentioned in the memorandum of understanding is the West Bank. Jordan is studying a draft of a similar memorandum of understanding on opening branches of Jordanian banks in the Gaza Strip.

On coordination with the Palestinian side, Dr. al-Nabulsi emphasized that Jordan has been in constant contact with the Palestinian side on the reopening of branches of Jordanian banks. He said the Palestinians were aware of the progress in the negotiations, and they urged Jordan to expedite reaching an agreement with Israel. It is also worth noting that progress was made in the negotiations on the banks before the announcement of the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles. These negotiations have been in harmony with Jordan's monetary and banking role as agreed on in the Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement. Furthermore, Jordan responded to the Palestinian request for adding an article in the Jordanian-Israeli agreement that ends the memorandum of understanding immediately with the end of the transitional stage in accordance with the PLO-Israeli Declaration of Principles, or when the authority and financial and monetary responsibilities are transferred to the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

Importance of Jordan-Palestine Coordination Viewed

JN3112112993 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 31 Dec 93 pp 1, 27

[Editorial: "Husayn-'Arafat Meeting"]

[Text] The meeting which took place between His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat at the International Queen Alia Airport yesterday has revived Jordanian-Palestinian coordination. This coordination has had its ups and downs throughout the peace process.

Yesterday's two-hour talks between King Husayn and 'Arafat come at a time when the Israeli intentions have been exposed in a blatant and contemptuous way and when it has become clear that Israel was obstructing the Gaza-Jericho First accord. In fact, Israel is intentionally following the course of maneuvering, procrastination, and deception in an attempt to torpedo the entire peace process now that it has achieved political, diplomatic, and economic gains from its alleged concern for peace and interests in launching a new stage of coexistence in the region.

The Jordanian and Palestinian sides assert the need to embark on a new stage of a long-term and clear earnest coordination between Jordan and Palestine. Such coordination will guarantee the Palestinian people's legitimate rights on their national soil, enable the Palestinian people to remain steadfast, alleviate the suffering of this people under occupation, and help them live an honorable life. Such coordination will also lead to a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace. Asserting this coordination is a return to the normal course that has always governed the historical relationship between the two twins. It is also an exact reflection of existent facts that cannot be denied, ignored, or bypassed.

The coordination between Jordan and Palestine in the battle for peace will have great effects on the two fraternal people, their interests, and their rights. It also constitutes a pillar and support for each part in its confrontation against the Israeli maneuvering and attempts to bypass the Palestinian people's legitimate rights to their land and homeland. This coordination—in addition to accomplishing coordination with the cordon states as well as on the Arab and Islamic levels—is a real guarantee to achieve a just, permanent, and comprehensive peace.

UK's Hurd, Delegation Arrive for Talks 3 Jan

'No Cause for Alarm' Over Peace Talks

NC0301183594 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd arrived at Beirut airport at 1645 today. He was received by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, who had just returned from Damascus, and British Ambassador May Fay Geraldine Forte and senior embassy staff.

The delegation accompanying the British secretary includes Senior Adviser Robert John Sowers, Charles Richard Stag, and Robert Nicola [names as heard].

Secretary Hurd will hold talks with his Lebanese counterpart at the Foreign Ministry. He will later head to B'abda Palace to meet with President Ilyas al-Hirawi. Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri will attend the meeting, in addition to Minister Buwayz.

Hurd said that there is no cause for alarm over the possible collapse of the peace process. He believes that no one wants to go back to the state of anarchy and lack of accord. The British secretary made this statement before he left London on a tour that will take him to Israel and Jordan, as well as Lebanon.

Hurd Meets Leaders at Working Dinner

NC0301203794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi hosted a working dinner this evening in honor of British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. It was attended by Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, and the British ambassador to Lebanon.

Earlier, the British official held a round of talks with Foreign Minister Buwayz at Bustrus Palace [Foreign Ministry]. Their discussion touched on the peace talks, developments in the region, and the participation of specialized British firms in the reconstruction of Lebanon.

In a joint news conference with Minister Buwayz, Hurd expressed Britain's support for UN Resolution 425. He praised the Lebanese people's efforts to rebuild their country. He pointed out that he is not mediating the peace process, but he noted his country's interest in facilitating the peace process on all tracks. Hurd viewed the Lebanese-Syrian coordination in the peace process as a source of momentum for this process.

The British secretary is scheduled to leave Beirut tonight for occupied Jerusalem, the second leg of his Middle East tour, which will also take him to Jordan.

Hurd, Buwayz Hold News Conference

NC0401102594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd arrived in Beirut at 1900 and left for Israel at 2200 yesterday. He began his talks in a meeting with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz at the Foreign Ministry. After a news conference, the two proceeded to the Presidential Palace, where a meeting was held with President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri. President al-Hirawi held a dinner banquet in honor of Hurd, which was attended by Birri, al-Hariri, Buwayz, and a number of ministers.

At a news conference following his talks with Buwayz, the British foreign secretary said that his visit to Beirut has two goals: The first is to learn all the latest developments regarding the peace process that pertain to Lebanon. He said: We in Britain realize that peace must be comprehensive and involve an agreement between Israel and Lebanon as well as the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 to open the way for the implementation of the al-Ta'if Agreement and to enable Lebanon to regain its full independence. This is important to us.

Hurd added: The second goal goes beyond the peace process. You in Lebanon are embarking on a reconstruction process after the war with skill, enthusiasm, and dynamism, as anyone would expect from the Lebanese on economic issues. I am anxious to understand what is happening so that we in Britain can translate this into cooperation and assistance, and this is what I did. I am pleased to note that our British exports to Lebanon increased quickly in the last month of last year. I am very pleased that British companies are interested in the airport project. I hope that the increasing exchange of trade and ministerial visits will help promote such cooperation.

He added: I want cooperation to expand to include the cultural field, cooperation between our armed forces, and cooperation in combating drug trafficking.

Hurd explained that he did not come as a mediator in the Middle East negotiations. But Britain has an interest in the success of the peace process, and if it can do something to help, it will do so without becoming a mediator.

Hurd said: Lebanon is a principal partner in the Middle East peace process. Peace must be comprehensive. We welcomed the September agreement between the PLO and Israel. We think that this is a very important step forward. But it is clear to me that it will not become final until agreements are concluded between Israel and Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. We are maintaining close contacts with the Jordanians, the Israelis, and the Syrians. He noted that the summit meeting between Presidents Clinton and al-Asad is very important and expressed the hope that it will advance the negotiations

on the Syrian-Israeli track and make it possible to overcome the difficulties. He noted that he is in touch with the U.S. secretary of state on the peace process.

Hurd affirmed Britain's support for UN Security Council Resolution 425 and said: All these matters are linked to the al-Ta'if Agreement, which we strongly support. These matters must be implemented in stages. Resolution 425 and the al-Ta'if Agreement—which we support—are the basis for progress and for Lebanon regaining its complete freedom.

Minister Buwayz said:

[Begin recording] [Buwayz] I would like first to welcome His Excellency Minister Douglas Hurd on his visit to Lebanon. As you know, and as I have already said during my visit to the United Kingdom, Britain has a long history that qualifies it to understand the problems of this area. There is no doubt that as Arab foreign ministers we have repeatedly called for effective participation by the European countries. When we refer to the European countries, we include Britain, of course. We think that in view of Britain's historical role in the Middle East, it is qualified to play a role in bilateral negotiations and in the peace process.

The talks between us dealt with the regional situation, the peace process, and ways to promote economic and cultural cooperation between Lebanon and Britain. We think that Lebanon's democracy, its free economic system, and the effectiveness of the Lebanese private sector provide numerous common denominators between the two countries and peoples and make it possible to discuss ways for fruitful cooperation.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, did Secretary Hurd suggest anything new to advance the peace process?

[Buwayz] Mr. Hurd is closely following the peace process. There is no doubt that as a result of his visit and becoming acquainted with the Lebanese views on the occupied territory in the south, he will be able to play a role in one way or another.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, [words indistinct] implementation of Resolution 425?

[Buwayz] I think that you have heard Mr. Hurd clearly state Britain's frank position on this resolution. I imagine that Britain is known for its firm views and positions.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, do you regard the British role today as complementing the U.S. role [words indistinct]?

[Buwayz] I imagine that there is cooperation between Britain, the United States, and a number of European states to promote the peace process.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, what about the British role in the reconstruction of Lebanon? Were there new developments on this matter?

[Buwayz] Of course, we held talks on this matter. As you know, British companies specialize in various sectors. I think that Britain is interested in Lebanon because of its democratic system and free economy and because of the things we have in common. [end recording]

Interior Minister Leaves for Arab Conference

NC0301105894 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1000 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Interior Minister Bisharah Mirhij left Beirut this morning at the head of a security delegation for Tunis to attend the Arab interior ministers conference, which is scheduled to begin there tomorrow.

Radio Reports Israeli Shelling, Resistance Attack

NC0401081194 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0415 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Areas around the villages of Tabnin, Bra'shit, 'Ayta al-Jabal, Haddathah, and nearby valleys came under artillery shelling from opposite Israeli positions last night. Earlier, resistance men attacked Bayt Yahun post with rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns.

Paper: Israeli Campaigns Aim To Influence Summit

JN0401075194 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 4 Jan 94

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Syria Does Not Care About Disinformation Campaigns," AL-BA'TH says: As the Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton approaches with the beginning of the countdown for this important event, we expect an escalation in disinformation campaigns against Syria and its position on the peace process. Israel has indeed been launching these campaigns since the announcement of the summit. Israel will continue to escalate these campaigns in a bid to besmirch Syria's position first and influence any possible results at the summit.

AL-BA'TH adds: Israel's disinformation campaigns are not the first, nor will they be the last. It is a familiar method which gets tougher whenever Syria manages to defend all Arab rights.

The paper asserts that Syria's stands, which stem from leader al-Asad's view of the nature of the Arab-Zionist conflict, are not likely to change. This is not meant as a hard-line approach, but is in line with Syria's concern about reaching a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The paper says: It is a fact in politics that whenever the enemy's attacks against you gets tougher, it is evidence of your sound position. Syria is in no need of any such evidence. In light of the historic leadership of President al-Asad, Syria knows exactly what it wants and this has become a deep-rooted approach that reflects the nation's conscience and aspirations.

AL-BA'TH concludes: At any rate, the upcoming summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton will attract the attention of the world which pins high hopes on the summit. No matter how tough Israel's rabid campaigns against Syria get, they will not affect Syria's stands and convictions, especially since its policy does not know secrets and corridors.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Meets With al-Asad

JN0301131494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz at 1245 today. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' attended the meeting.

Al-Shar' received Faris Buwayz this morning in the presence of Yusuf Shakkur, assistant foreign minister. The discussion during the meeting dealt with the peace process and its developments, and the tasks of the heads of the Syrian and Lebanese delegations who had left for Washington for consultations with the U.S. side on the forthcoming stages of the peace process. The two sides also reviewed the latest developments in the region.

Further on al-Asad Meeting

JN0301191594 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Excerpt] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz at 1245 today. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' attended the meeting. Talks during the meeting centered on future concerted efforts to be taken within the framework of the peace process, as well as the tasks entrusted to the heads of the Syrian and Lebanese delegations to the Washington bilateral peace talks.

They also touched on the expected meeting in Geneva between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton. [passage omitted]

Paper Criticizes Israeli-Vatican Agreement

JN0201085994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 2 Jan 94

[From the press review]

[Text] In a commentary today, the newspaper TISHRIN addresses the normalization agreement signed between the Vatican and Israel to pave the way for the establishment of full diplomatic ties. Under the headline "The Vatican and Israel," TISHRIN says: The agreement has flagrantly overlooked the sufferings of the Palestinian people living under occupation, as well as their right to self-determination. It has also disregarded the issue of Jerusalem. Thus, the Vatican has acted against its declared stands since 1948 with regard to freedom for the Palestinian people and Jerusalem, particularly since Israel has repeatedly said that it will never return Jerusalem to its rightful owners, and that Jerusalem will remain Israel's eternal capital.

TISHRIN adds: It is striking that the Vatican which, like many world states, is watching the hateful and racist operations taking place in the occupied territories, should nullify, by this agreement, all the sympathy it demonstrated toward the Palestinian people's cause, and Palestinian children, who are being killed by Israeli bullets.

The paper goes on to say: The Vatican has forgotten or chosen to forget the ordeal of the Palestinian people, who were displaced by Israel and whose lands were confiscated by Israel. In Article 4 of the normalization agreement, there is a pledge to respect the existing situation; namely, Israeli occupation. Even more dangerous is the normalization agreement that is meant to pave the way for a visit to occupied Jerusalem by the Holy See. Then, new developments in the interest of Israel and Zionism will surface. This will promote their hostile schemes in the region.

Concluding its commentary, TISHRIN says: The agreement has failed to note in any way whatsoever the future of the holy city, and overlooked the fate of an entire population; namely, the Palestinian people.

Afghanistan

Fighting in Kabul, Provinces Detailed

BK0301153294 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan speak of continued fighting among rival mojahedin groups for the third day today. The fighting is concentrated in the southeastern part of Kabul and various other areas in the northwest. Dostam militia is pitted against forces loyal to President Borhanoddin Rabbani. AFP report says forces loyal to Prime Minister Golboddibn Hekmatyar are also believed to be taking part in the fighting against President Rabbani's forces. Government troops have attacked Dostam militia posiitions in northern Faryab and Qonduz Provinces. Fierce fighting has been reported near the river port Sherkhan Bandar, Balkh, and important northern city of Mazar-e Sharif controlled by Dostam militia. The rival groups have made conflicting claims of victories. Government sources in Kabul claim that Mazar-e Sharif airport is under the government control and no Dostam plane can take off. Dostam has around 40 planes there.

A statement issued by the Embassy of Afghanistan in Islamabad says that situation in Kabul is improving. Afghan Government spokesman Habib Shah Hamid told newsmen that the Mojahed Army of Afghanistan Government has captured the airport of Mazar-e Sharif. Harakat-e Enqelab-e Eslami [Islamic Revolution Movement] of Mowlawi Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi, Mahaz-e Meli-e Eslami [National Islamic Front] of Pir Sayyed Ahmad Gilani, Etehad-e Eslami [Islamic Union] of Professor Sayyaf, Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] of Mowlawi Mohammad Yunes Khales and Jehad councils of Nangharhar and Konarha Provinces have declared their support for government of Afghanistan.

All the personnel of Pakistan Embassy in Kabul are safe and well.

Government Claims Control of Kabul

LD0401120594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Clashes among the warring factions continue in the capital city of Afghanistan. However, falling snow has curtailed the intensity of the battle. A report dispatched by the Voice and Vision correspondent from Kabul indicates that following the heavy battles of the past few days, groups of people have left their homes to purchase basic essentials. At the same time, a large number of people are trying to flee the city, fearing that the clashes might intensify again.

Our colleague, Darestani, reports by telephone from Kabul on the latest developments and the situation in Kabul today:

[Darestani] Thousands of family groups, whose houses have been demolished during the clashes, began moving toward more secure regions today. After three days of heavy battles, the government is saying that its forces have succeeded in taking control of the important centers of the capital. At the same time, General Fahim, the head of Kabul's general security, who is one of the top commanders in the Shura-ye Nozzar [Supervisory Council], said today: The president's forces are in full control of all the central districts in the city of Kabul, except part of the heights in the southern and southeastern districts and two joint headquarters of General 'Abd-al-Rashid Dostam's forces, and the forces of Golboddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] along the slopes leading to these heights. He added: General Dostam's forces were forced to retreat from Kabul airport.

At the same time, reports have reached us indicating that General Dostam's forces have taken positions in three areas of Kabul airport.

General Fahim, referring to the efforts undertaken by some jehad groups of Afghanistan including Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami, Hezb-e Harakat-e Enqelab-e Eslami [Islamic Revolutionary Movement] and Hezb-e Jam'iat-e Eslami [Islamic Society], as well as Iran and Pakistan to establish a cease-fire in Kabul, further added: We regard these efforts positively and if practical steps were to be taken to esablish a cease-fire, Borhanoddin Rabbani would welcome it.

Our colleague, in continuation of his report from Kabul, added: The commander of General Dostam's forces has announced that the forces under his command have made major advances in the battlefields.

Speaking from his headquarters in the southeastern suburbs of Kabul, he described the losses inflicted on Ahmed Shah Mas'ud's forces as being very heavy.

Temporary Cease-Fire in Effect

LD0401110394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Following Iran's proposal of a temporary cease-fire for a few hours in Kabul to evacuate those injured during the incidents of the past few days, the warring sides in Afghanistan declared their acceptance of the proposal.

Announcing the news, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said: The representatives of the president and the prime minister of Afghanistan contacted this ministry to declare their acceptance.

He added: The Islamic Republic of Iran declares its readiness to receive those injured in the recent incidents and calls on international organizations and the International Red Cross to assist in this humanitarian deed.

According to reports from Islamic Republic of Iran correspondents, the hospitals in Kabul cannot cope with the large number of wounded and are in desperate need of space and medical facilities.

India

Dixit Returns From Islamabad, Views Talks

BK0401041494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] The foreign secretary, Mr. J.N. Dixit, has returned to New Delhi from Islamabad after talks with his Pakistani counterpart Mr. Shaharyar Khan. He is likely to brief the prime minister today. At the end of the two days of foreign secretary-level talks, Mr. Dixit indicated that New Delhi would make fresh proposals regarding the Siachen Glacier and Sir Creek to normalize relations between the two countries. He said despite the fundamental differences over Kashmir, both sides agreed to find ways of resolving the problem. A joint statement issued at the conclusion of the seventh round of talks stressed the need to continue the dialogue with a view to addressing all outstanding issues.

Italian Foreign Minister Meets President

BK0301162094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] India and Italy have agreed to intensify contacts between businessmen of both the countries and disseminate information about opportunities created by liberalization. This was agreed to when the visiting foreign minister of Italy, Professor Beniamino Andreatta, met the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in New Delhi today.

Earlier, Mr. Andreatta along with members of his delegation called on the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, at Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House]. During the half an hour meeting they exchanged views on various bilateral matters and international issues.

The Italian minister later called on the external affairs minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh. Both the foreign ministers expressed satisfaction at the excellent relations between the two countries.

The visiting dignitary will call on the prime minister tomorrow.

Uzbek President Karimov Meets With Sharma

BK0301161294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] The Uzbekistan president, Mr. Islam A. Karimov, who arrived on a three-days visit to India today has said that the Constitution of his country provides for a secular state. During his one-hour long talks with the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Mr. Karimov said that Tashkent attaches great importance to relations with India. It also appreciates New Delhi's support to the reconstruction of his country. He said India should play a greater role in both political and economic spheres in the Central Asian region. Both the leaders have condemned religious fundamentalism. Dr. Sharma recalled the historical relations between the two countries. He said Tashkent has become emotionally a part of Indian history with the former prime minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, passing away in that city. Mr. Karimov informed Dr. Sharma that the room occupied by Lal Bahadur Shastri has been converted into a museum.

Stresses Friendly Ties

BK0401043894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] The Uzbekistan president, Mr. Islam Karimov, has said that his country will work to prevent conflicts in Central Asia and for the expansion and development of regional and international cooperation. He was speaking at the banquet hosted by the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, in New Delhi yesterday. Mr. Karimov said his country looked forward to friendly relations and establishment of cooperation with India.

In his address, the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, called for common efforts to fight the threat of terrorism and extremism which subvert the economic development and progress of nations. He expressed the hope that the emergence of independent nations in Central Asia will lead to another cultural renaissance and interaction among the nations of Asia.

Russian Army Delegation Arrives 3 Jan

BK0301164894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] A high-level Russian army delegation is now in the capital on a six-day goodwill visit. The deputy defense minister and commander in chief of the Russian land force, Colonel General Vladimir Semyonov, is leading the delegation. They will have wide-ranging discussions with the army chief, General B.C. Joshi, and call on the minister of state for defense, Mr. Mallikarjun. The Russian delegation will be visiting some Army formations and training establishments, besides places of historical interest in Jaipur, Agra, and Poona.

NAL, Russian Firm To Develop Aircraft

BK0401054894 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 19 Dec 93 p 14

[Text] Bangalore—The Bangalore-based National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) has signed an agreement with Russia's Myasishchev Design Bureau (MDB) to develop a multi-role 14-seater light transport aircraft to suit the domestic markets of the two countries.

The two governments entered into an agreement on November 6, 1993, to produce three prototypes of the aircraft named "Saras-duet", by 1996 before taking up

serious production in both the countries. Government of India has sanctioned Rs. [rupees] 20 crore for the Rs. 95 crore project.

Rs. 25 crore will be pumped in by a Delhi based exporter who has agreed to take up the production after getting certification from the DGCA [Director General of Civil Aviation]. However, no formal agreement has been signed with the private company.

NAL's civil aviation unit head Shivakumar Swamy told INDIAN EXPRESS at the Avia India '93 where the Saras-duet mock-model became the star attraction, that the concept to develop a light transport aircraft was conceived three years ago.

While the NAL was working on a design to produce a 14-seater aircraft, the Russians too were working on a somewhat similar class of aircraft. The two teams got together and worked on a common model based on the two designs. Since then the scientists of the two countries have been visiting each other at their own expense to develop the design of the aircraft.

The design configuration has been frozen and NAL and MBD are now working on the development of the prototype.

Swamy said that the cost would be split between the two countries to avoid any transfer of funds. While NAL would produce some parts, the MDB would assemble the first prototype in Russia by November 1995. Meanwhile, NAL would help the Delhi-based private company to set up a plant at Mahr (near Bangalore) on a 200 acre plot of land.

Panel Reports on PSLV Launch Failure

BK0301132894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] An experts panel which probed the failure of the maiden PSLV [polar satellite launch vehicle] launch last September says that a software error in the pitch-controlled loop of the guidance and control processor led to the setback. According to the chairman of the panel, Mr. N. Pant, the error occurred when the control command exceeded the maximum limiting value. The panel, however, confirmed that all the major systems, including the giant solid booster and the liquid propulsion systems of the PSLV worked as planned. There is no lacuna in the rocket design also.

The finding of the panel was released by the Indian Space Research Organization in Bangalore today.

Iran

Russia Cancels Submarine Sale; Ukraine To Supply Spares

PM3012160093 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Dec 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "After Suspending Deal on Two Nuclear Reactors, Russia Cancels Sale of Third Submarine to Iran"]

[Text] Moscow, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Russian and Western sources said yesterday that Russian President Boris Yeltsin has "postponed indefinitely" the decision to sell Iran a third very advanced submarine.

Mikhail Gorbachev, the last president of the Soviet Union, signed a contract to sell Iran three diesel-powered "Kilo" class submarines. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the Russian Government announced that it would honor the contract, and indeed delivered two submarines to Iran.

Russian sources yesterday pointed out that the decision to cancel the sale of the third submarine to Iran is justifiable, because it concerns an optional sale agreement, not a pledge to sell, as was the case with the two other submarines.

Russia decided early this month to cancel the sale of two nuclear-powered stations to Iran because of the latter's inability to pay their costs, as was reported. Tehran accused Moscow of "submitting to Washington's pressures."

The U.S. Administration spoke to more than 20 states, including Russia, in a bid to persuade them not to sell advanced weapons to Iran.

While Russia emphasized the decision not to sell the third submarine to Iran, Ukraine tried to win part of the Iranian arms market. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrey Zlenko said that his government has decided to supply Iran with spare parts for the Soviet-made weapons in the Iranian arsenal. He pointed out that Kiev has rejected the "improper pressure" exercised by Washington and is determined to strengthen its relations with Tehran.

Borys Tarasyuk, senior Ukrainian arms exports expert, announced that Iran is not one of the states to which Ukrainian arms exports are banned. He pointed out that only Serbia, Libya, Cuba, North Korea, and South Africa are subject to this ban. Tarasyuk pointed out that Iran is offering Ukraine oil at "very tempting prices" in return for spare parts and military technologies.

Visiting Turkmen Delegation Continues Activities

LD0301221694 Tehran IRNA in English 2156 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 3, IRNA—Deputy president of Turkmenistan in charge of communications Sarjayev [name and title as received] Monday [3 January] met with Iran's Minister of Roads and Transportation Akbar Torkan and reviewed outlooks for surface, air and sea transport between Iran and Turkmenistan.

The two officials were hopeful of setting up a shipping link between Iranian and Turkmen ports on the Caspian Sea.

Meanwhile, the ministers of culture, press, and physical education of Turkmenistan along with the managing director of the television station of that country on Monday visited Niavaran Culture House of Tehran.

Turkmen Minister of Culture and Tourism, Geldymurad Nurmukhamedov, called for cultural cooperation especially exchange of books and scientific information between the two countries.

Iran can help Turkmenistan set up libraries and cultural centres in his country, he said.

Turkmen Minister of Press and Publications, Divan Qoliev, [name and title as received] who is a leading writer himself, suggested media cooperation and exchange of periodicals and related matter between Iran and Turkmenistan.

Also a group of religious figures of that republic on Monday met with the officials of the Islamic Propagation Organization of Iran here Monday.

President Saparmurad Niyazov of Turkmenistan arrived here on Sunday heading a high-ranking delegation.

Interior Ministers Meet

LD0301213394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Mr. Kasymov, the interior minister of Turkmenistan, and all the governors general of Turkmenistan met and conferred with Interior Minister Besharati on Monday [3 January] afternoon.

At the meeting, which was also attended by governors general of Khorasan, Gilan, and Mazandaran and a number of Interior Ministry directors general and officials, Mr. Kasymov referred to the effective role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region. He said: Iran is a powerful economic and political country in the region, whose benefits can be enjoyed by her neighbors, including Turkmenistan.

Referring to the affection of the people of the people of Turkmenistan for the great Iranian nation, the Turkmen interior minister added: One priority policy of the Turkmen Government is to establish warm and sincere relations with the government and people of Iran. I hope that these trips and exchanges of delegations will result in the further strengthening and expansion of ties between the two countries.

Referring to the good relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and its neighbors in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Mr. Besharati said: In the course of the expansion of commercial and economic relations, we should be watchful of suggestions and temptations by those opposed to the friendship between the two countries. At this sensitive juncture when most countries in the world are facing major economic and moral crises, neighboring countries should strive to solve the problems of one another.

Recounting the dangers of narcotics and arms contraband, the interior minister called on the Turkmen authorities to deal seriously with that phenomenon. He declared Iran's readiness to supply the experience gained in that field.

At the meeting the governors general of the two countries discussed issues of interest, including creating facilities in matters relating to border transit and visas, opening consulates, expanding railway lines, and setting up maritime communication.

Oil, Gas Agreements Discussed

LD0301211194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Ways of implementing gas and oil agreements between Iran and Turkmenistan were discussed at a meeting between the minister of gas and oil of Turkmenistan and our country's oil minister in Tehran on Monday [3 January] evening.

According to a Central News Unit report, under an agreement between the oil ministers of the two countries, Turkmenistan is prepared to provide the gas required by the border areas of the two countries, and to submit the results of technical and economic studies on pipelines for that country's gas exports to Iran.

At the meeting, possible ways of routing Turkmenistan's oil and gas pipelines, including routes through the Islamic Republic of Iran, were reviewed.

Results of Habibi's Visit to Turkey Examined

NC3012151993 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 25 Dec 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Mutual Ties, Better Than Expectations"]

[Text] The Iranian First Vice-President, Dr. Habibi returned home on Wednesday [22 December] after a two-day visit to Turkey.

At the Ankara airport the Turkish prime minister and Dr. Habibi enumerated the results of the bilateral talks,

and described the prospects for the future of the cooperation between the two countries quite hopeful.

After the death of the late Turkish president, Turgut Ozal, in April 1993 many political analysts had expressed the opinion that the period of friendly relations between Iran and Turkey had passed away along with the deceased Turkish president.

This group of analysts focussed on a series of parameters which reflected the personal preferences of president Ozal, and arrived at the conclusion that mutual ties between Iran and Turkey were founded on personal factors and decisions.

In practice, however, it has been proven that the above conclusion is erroneous, and the reason is quite obvious. Common interests between the two countries are of such depth and range that no political leader in Turkey can escape the conclusion that maintaining and even expanding cordial relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran is a necessity in view of the national interests of Turkey.

It cannot be denied of course that there are many influential groups in Turkey that would like to function as the agent of the Western pressures of Iran. These influential groups are mainly scattered in the Turkish press and army.

The influence of the Zionists among the Turkish press is quite obvious and even the Turkish statesmen do not try to deny it in their negotiations. But the prevalent conditions in the world and in the region does not allow them to appear as final determining forces on the political arena.

The geographical region formed by Turkey-Iran provides the Europeans with the natural access to Asia. In fact political leaders in the two countries could arrive at early solutions for minor differences such as the presence of opposition forces in both countries, as soon as the leaders are able to view bilateral ties between Iran and Turkey within the context of a global perspective of political issues.

The propaganda campaign launched by the Western media last year on the supposed rivalry between Iran and Turkey in the Central Asian countries also proved to be a misconception in practice. Once again the realities of political life have shown that no fierce competition is practicable or even advisable. The Central Asian countries are so poor and so much in need of assistance, that there will always be scope for activity no matter how much is done in that region. Furthermore, both Iran and Turkey are facing so many economic problems that they can invest in the Central Asian republics only on a limited scale.

Turkey's Extension of 'Poised Hammer' Mandate Questioned

NC3012174693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary: "Turkey Extends Poised Hammer Mandate"]

[Text] The Turkish parliament extended the Poised Hammer mandate on Tuesday, 28 December. The vote was 196 to 160, with two abstentions. The Turkish National Security Council [NSC] recommended the extension of that force's mandate on 20 December. The NSC's decision had to be supported by the Council of Ministers and the parliament in order to be legalized.

Poised Hammer, which was originally deployed in Turkey for a period of three months after the Gulf War, has been in that country for nearly two years. Obviously, the Turkish parliament's approval will enable that force to remain in Turkey for another six months. Recalling the deployment of Poised Hammer in Turkey, several political experts believe that it has a rather wide-ranging sphere of activity. They also believe that Poised Hammer can be used to strengthen Washington's regional security plan and oppose any move that might threaten Western interests in the region.

The Turkish Government has allowed the deployment of an allied military force on its territory to defend certain parts of its border and protect the Kurds against possible attacks by the Baghdad regime. But how can the Turkish Government claim that the country's sovereignty extends right up to its border? Is Poised Hammer's task limited to what has been disclosed thus far, or does this force have an undisclosed mission in the region? The Turkish people are in the dark about this, and opposition by a significant number of people in Turkey to the presence of the allied military unit in this country can be viewed from this perspective.

Some 69.37 percent of the respondents in a public opinion poll carried out by the TURKISH DAILY NEWS in Ankara last year said that they wanted the Western military units to withdraw from Turkey. Considering that nothing has been mentioned in connection with the duration of the Poised Hammer mandate and when this force's task will end, it is believed that setting a date for the withdrawal of this force will take a long time.

Petroleum Minister Views Oil Price 'Crisis'

LD0201121394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] Petroleum Minister Gholam Rez Aqazadeh-Kho'i once again called on OPEC members and non-OPEC producers to reduce oil production to confront the oil price drop crisis. Aqazadeh pointed out that the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready for any kind of cooperation with other OPEC members.

According to a report by our correspondent in Rasht, the petroleum minister proposed that OPEC production be reduced by four to five percent.

An IRNA report mentions that the petroleum minister said OPEC and non-OPEC members' overproduction is the main factor in the decreasing trend of oil prices, but at the same time added that behind-the-scenes political issues have also contributed to the current oil price crisis.

Aqazadeh added that during the first six months of the current year, average oil prices were above $16 and it was expected that they go even higher during the winter. But that failed to happen, which is not normal.

Alliance With Iraq, GCC Suggested

LD0101131394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1105 GMT 1 Jan 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Oil prices continue to fall steadily. During last Wednesday's [29 December] exchanges in European markets, the price of all varieties of crude oil fell to its lowest level in the last five years. [passage omitted]

The West's double standard with regard to international trade is quite clear. On the one hand, the West has invariably called for lifting tariffs and restrictions and has promoted the notion of free trade; on the other hand, by imposing heavy tariffs on fossil fuels, it has violated the most fundamental principle of free trade.

Some economic analysts believe that at present, the countries of the Middle East region can bring their economies out of the present vulnerability only by ending their reliance on income generated by a single product and expanding their sources of foreign exchange earnings.

The members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], together with Iran and Iraq, can form a powerful alliance in connection with the oil issue. Due to their common cultural and historical traits and their good understanding of production capacities, and also in view of the fact that they hold control over the most vital source of energy for the industrial countries of the world, these states are able to deal with the harmful policies of Europe and America with regards to gasoline. They can, perhaps, impose heavy tariffs on European and American products, thereby making amends for part of of the losses incurred by the fall in oil prices.

In the same way that the Western world waged a devious confrontation against the oil-producing countries in 1973, now is the time for the OPEC member states to pave the way for real growth without reliance on oil income. The OPEC member states can achieve this growth by transforming their production structures, lessening their reliance on income generated by oil, and finally, by enhancing the rich culture of work and contentment—which are, after all, characteristics present in Islamic countries. [passage omitted]

Petroleum Minister Discusses Gas Supplies, Consumption

LD0101147294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] The growth in the consumption of natural gas in the state is three times that envisaged in the first development plan.

On the eve of commissioning several important gas projects in the northern cities of the country, as well a new unit becoming operational in the Cangan gas refinery, Petroleum Minister Aqazadeh-Kho'i, in an interview with the Central News Unit of the Voice and Vision, said: At the moment, 105 million cubic meters of gas per day are being refined and consumed throughout the country. With a new unit being commissioned in the Cangan gas refinery within the next few days, which will have a capacity of 10 million cubic meters, the state capacity for producing and refining gas will be increased to 115 million cubic meters per day.

The oil minister added: The extent of the daily consumption of gas in the current year [beginning 21 March 1993] compared to last year, increased by 20 million cubic meters on average. That is an increase of about 20 percent.

He said that the amount of gas that can be supplied to power stations is a maximum of 20-30 million cubic meters per day and the trend of supply has been better than in past years. He added: Gas consumption in state power stations is greater than supply, and the shortfall is made up by liquid fuels such as fuel oil and diesel oil.

The oil minister described the amount of liquid fuel stored at power stations to be satisfactory, and pointed out that with the cooperation of the Ministry of Power approximately 400 million liters of fuel oil have been stored in power stations during spring and summer. However, this does not mean a uniform regulation of stored fuel in all the stations—when there is a large temperature drop and fuel consumption in Tehran increases, gas production does not meet the total state consumption. Therefore, in some stations, diesel oil has to be used instead of gas.

Regarding gas supply projects in the country, the oil minister said: In the first development plan more than 100 cities joined the gas network. Cities connected to the gas network total nearly 200. The consumption growth has reached over 21 percent instead of the envisaged 7.6 percent. The rate of growth is fast, and efforts to meet gas supply figures in the first plan have been extensive.

He announced the growth of investment in the gas sector to be three times that envisaged in the first state development plan, and said: In the second development plan the same attention must be paid to gas investment projects so that all or most areas of the country can be supplied with gas within a suitable period.

Egyptian Official Notes Interest in Economic Cooperation

LD0301163694 Tehran IRNA in English 1551 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Kerman, Jan. 3, IRNA—Head of the Egyptian caretaker office here, Dr. Faraj, today announced Cairo's readiness to expand industrial and agricultural cooperation and relations with Islamic Iran.

Faraj, who made the remark in a meeting with governor general of this southeastern province, Hoseyn Mar'ashi, hoped that cultural commonalities between Iran and Egypt could lead to improvement of relations and bilateral cooperation in various fields.

He expressed hope that Egypt could further promote its relations with central Asian republics through Islamic Republic of Ira .

Faraj said Egypt was interested in importing dried fruits from Iran and enumerated his country's mineral potentials.

Mar'ashi briefed Faraj on the potentials of Kerman province, especially agricultural products, including dates, pistachios, citrus fruits and mineral products.

He spoke of economic cooperation with Egypt within the framework of Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy.

Reports on Desire To Resume Ties With Egypt Dismissed

NC0101203594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] A number of Arabic newspapers linked to the reactionary countries in the region have for some time suggested that the Islamic Republic of Iran is very eager to restore ties with the Egyptian Government. It is nothing new to say that these newspapers have adopted Zionist stances. For many years the Arab reactionary countries have been funding with their petrodollars not only hireling newspapers and propaganda trumpets, but also the bullets that are fired at the breasts of the Muslim Palestinian revolutionaries. These hireling newspapers of the reactionary countries in the region occasionally fabricate news that Tehran wishes to resume ties with Cairo.

By publishing these venomous reports, international Zionism, which dictates stances to these agent newspapers, seeks to achieve several goals. Fabricating such reports is designed to suggest that officials in the Islamic Republic of Iran are not serious about their hostile position toward Zionism and that the desire to restore relations with the Camp David regime in Cairo indicates that they are inwardly inclined toward normalizing relations with the Zionist camp. Such moves would distort the image of the holy Islamic republican regime in Iran, which is one of Zionism's main goals. Another objective behind the attempts of these hireling newspapers is to dishearten the Muslim revolutionaries in the Arab world and to quell the confrontation with Zionism and the agent governments in the region. They also aim to suggest that the leaders of the Islamic revolution have reached this conclusion too, and so they want to recognize the Camp David government in Cairo, and, consequently, may reconsider their position on the Zionist entity. The third goal is to legitimize the Zionist entity in Islamic public opinion and try to make the international Islamic revival look like a futile attempt that leads nowhere.

Since we consider that the Islamic Republic of Iran is the base of the international Islamic revival, spreading doubts and despair among the Islamic public about this regime's positions is considered the most important issue in the Islamic world. Portraying the Islamic revival movement as futile offers the greatest support for Zionism.

Islamic revolution leader Ayatollah Khamene'i's unequivocal and firm stand on important international and Islamic world issues, particularly those dealing with confronting America and supporting the Muslim Palestinian and Lebanese revolutionaries against the Zionist entity that occupies Palestine, has always been the main factor in confronting and foiling the media schemes of the enemies of the Islamic revolution.

Regarding the resumption of ties between Tehran and Cairo, the Islamic revolution leader adopts a firm and unequivocal stand on this issue, exposing the true nature of this regime which is hostile to Islam and dominates Egypt. He defined the Islamic Republic's foreign policy to our diplomatic institutions. The London-based Arabic newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT claimed recently that Iran's first vice president discussed with Syrian officials during his recent visit to Damascus the resumption of ties with Cairo. The paper also claimed that the Syrian officials expressed satisfaction with the progress of these talks during their meeting with the Egyptian prime minister. The first vice president's office refuted these claims and said that the Iranian and Syrian officials did not discuss ties between Tehran and Cairo.

Naturally, adopting a firm and decisive stand on the traitorous Egyptian Government requires genuine faith in this issue; such a government will fall because it is separated from its people, is subservient to satanic forces, and is hostile to Islam. The foreign diplomatic agencies of the Iranian Islamic Republic adopt firm and honest stances in the excercise of foreign policy. Even Westerners themselves realize that the Cairo regime is

dying and believe that the situation of the Mubarak government is very similar to that of the shah's government in 1978. By accusing the Islamic Republic of Iran of having a desire to resume ties with the Egyptian Government, the hireling newspapers and media that serve the reactionary countries in the region seek to save the Camp David rulers in Cairo from the crushing blows that the domestic opposition is dealing them.

Commentary Views U.S. 'Threats,' 'Pressure'

NC3012141093 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 18 Dec 93 p 14

[Unattributed commentary: "The Somali Quagmire and the Pentagon's New Temptations"]

[Text] The Zionist newspaper THE WASHINGTON TIMES, continuing its reporting on threats by pro-Zionist elements against the Islamic Republic of Iran, has carried an article alleging that "America is planning a conflict with Iran and a war with the Islamic Republic of Iran will be unavoidable." This newspaper, which has always been run by Zionist institutions and Jewish American shareholders, especially for the past half century [as published], cited a Pentagon official as saying: "During the past 10 years Iran has purchased billions of dollars of arms; and if we disregard the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf, Iran is today the most powerful military strength in the Persian Gulf."

Such views and comments precisely reflect efforts by a large segment of the Zionist officials in the U.S. ruling system to create tension in the Persian Gulf and to prepare the necessary grounds for a new adventurism in the Middle East.

The article in the Zionist newspaper THE WASHINGTON TIMES appears after a year of unsettling militarism in the Horn of Africa. After drawing in most of their Asian and European allies and treating the United Nations like a puppet in their hands, the Americans are disgracefully trying to save themselves from the Somali quagmire. THE WASHINGTON TIMES article comes at a time when Secretary of Defense Les Aspin has resigned in view of the defeat of America's unrestrained diplomacy in Somalia and when, under the crushing pressures of American public opinion, the President had no alternative but to immediately accept his resignation.

This is one side of the coin. But the other side should be sought in the torturing loneliness that America is facing in its confrontation with the Islamic revolution. The Zionist circles' propaganda in America is a reflection of the failure that America has constantly met when seeking Europe's cooperation in confronting the Islamic revolution.

At least before the U.S. presidential elections, some political analysts believed that such American pressures on its allies to encourage them to side with America against the Islamic Republic of Iran was only the policy of the Republicans and that the Democrats were not as insistent as the Republicans on this. But now it has become clear that basically such methods constitute American policy in general and not the policy of either Bush or Clinton in particular. In other words, from the point of view of the White House, hostility to the Islamic Republic of Iran is not a tactic but a strategy.

America's strategy is to portray Islamic Iran as a regional and world threat; and they use the tactic of saying that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a threat to the region, to its neighbors, and to world peace and security, and that it should be confronted. The Americans believe that through this policy they can apply all-around economic, political, and especially military pressure and thus hinder Iran's economic growth.

The 15-year experience of hostile American stances vis-a-vis the Islamic revolution and, especially, the eight-year experience of the oppressive and imposed war against the Islamic Republic of Iran were testimony to two realities. The first one is that in a world filled with profit-seeking economic rivalries and competitions, the breaking down of economic, political, or military walls and neutralizing hegemonistic plots is not a complicated matter; the other fact is that there is a basic necessity for a country in a region which has been the scene of American-made crises for a decade to strengthen its defensive structure and strive to achieve military and economic self-sufficiency. Under such conditions, the Islamic Republic of Iran cannot be indifferent to issues that are directly linked to the country's fate and the independence, freedom, territorial integrity, and security of its people. Therefore, during both the war and the so-called era of sanctions and today, our efforts have always been aimed at seriously preserving our military and operational skills and power and our economic growth.

The Islamic Republic of Iran wants to achieve a degree of economic and military strength where no one could be tempted to start a fresh show of strength and mischief in the region. And precisely because of this, the belief is that the stronger the Islamic Republic of Iran's combat ability and economy are, the more regional peace and stability will benefit, and that this is the only way that it can maintain its effective role in preserving regional security. This is a reality of which the Western world on the one hand and the regional Arab rulers on the other are aware, despite their propaganda. The Zionist circles in America are concerned precisely because they know that with the increasing defensive capability of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the White House's plans to create chaos in the region will be foiled. If the regional countries are realistic and look at past history and regard their situation with insight, then they will accept this reality more confidently and will realize that the greater the military strength of Iran, as the guardian of the longest borders in the Persian Gulf, the more efficient security in the region will be.

The Americans are trying to put economic, military, and political pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran specifically at the Middle East regional level and are pursuing two major objectives in this process. One is to portray Iran as a threat and thus to pave the way for their continued illegal presence in the region and the continued dependence of regional Arab countries on them; the other is to promote more arms sales. Thus, on the one hand the return flow of the astronomical sums from purchases of Persian Gulf oil back into the pockets of American banks will be ensured, and on the other hand, the arming of regional regimes will create favorable conditions for Israel to make excessive demands.

It should be noted that some time after the oil war, the United States sold billions of dollars of arms—quantities unprecedented in U.S. history—to the regional Arab countries on the pretext of creating a balance in the Persian Gulf and through its extensive propaganda about the Iranian threat.

Nevertheless, the experience of the past 15 years have proven that neither economic sanctions nor political, economic, and military threats by America against the Islamic Republic of Iran have ever yielded the favorable results that the Americans expected.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has found its way in an arena that is filled with world plots, so such ploys will never be able to force a review of our stances and activities on this great nation that has tread the path of revolution and the path of integrity and emerged intact from the most dangerous and deadly plots.

Jannati Sermon Discusses Bosnia, Other Issues

LD3112151593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1143 GMT 31 Dec 93

[Second Friday prayers sermon by Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati in Tehran on 31 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Christians should see how unlike Jesus Christ they are; how much injustice they committed last year against the oppressed, especially Muslims; how much innocent blood they shed; how many women and children died; how so many people were exposed to extreme cold and heat without shelter. What did Christians do in Bosnia? It is Christians who are committing massacres and genocide. They really want Islam and Muslims not to exist there. They are Christians.

Does that pope, who takes those stances regarding Israel and recognizes Israel, see what is happening in Bosnia, and what they are doing there? Of course, they are not Catholics, but they are nevertheless Christians. He should see what his fellow Christians are doing. There are some Catholics who act in the same way; they are not all that innocent of that sort of thing.

Then they should work out what they are going to do next year, how much corruption there is in those societies, moral corruption, financial and economic corruption, political corruption. Various kinds of corruption have penetrated the depths of Christian society. Are they contemplating reforming themselves? Are they thinking about bringing the growth of corruption under control? They are galloping toward doom and destruction, and they are unaware of it.

We hope that, God willing, Islam will proceed as fast as it is advancing all over the world at present, and before long, thanks to the blessings of this Islamic revolution and the blood of these martyrs, Islam will conquer those countries. [crowd chants "God is great," "Khamene'i is the leader," "Death to America," "Death to Israel"]

One of our non-Iranian friends who resides in Europe traveled to Iran recently. Yesterday he was telling me some very optimistic things. He said Islam is growing in Europe in a spontaneous fashion. The youth there are showing their inclination toward Islam by growing beards, while the women are increasingly wearing Islamic dress. It seems, therefore, that Islam in Europe is growing naturally. Perhaps these Muslims do not even know the reason for their inclination toward Islam, but what they do know is that they are enthusiastically interested in Islam. The attraction of the Islamic revolution and Islam has influenced them, and unwittingly they are being drawn toward Islam. The other side, the non-Muslims are resisting this trend. But the more they resist, the stronger the Muslims will become.

He also said that the imam's decree on Salman Rushdie, and the shameful stances adopted by Europe toward the issue, has made Islam grow. These issues have caused a rejuvenation of Islamic spirit in Europe at a time when the European Muslims had all but forgotten their identity.

Our friend said that in Europe there are about 30 million Muslims, who came to that continent from various countries and faced degradation, ignorance, and suppression. They were fast losing their identity, and although they were Muslims, they had very little Islamic integrity in themselves. When the Salman Rushdie affair occurred and the imam issued his decree, these Muslims suddenly recovered their forgotten existence. They returned to their origins, and found out once again what Islam is all about. The women became intensely interested in Islamic dress. This was to such an extent that certain governmental organs said they would not employ women wearing Islamic dress. This caused the Muslim women to protest and ask: What do you exactly require? If you want specialized knowledge, expertise, and academic qualifications, we possess them all. What inadequacy do you find in us that induces you to reject us?

This issue in itself has turned into something which on the one hand has brought disgrace to the governments, and on the other hand has served to strengthen the

resolve of the Muslims. This is the process which is currently in progress in Europe.

In the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina, no matter how much they try to cover up the atrocities, they will not remain hidden. The people are beginning to understand what is being wreaked on Muslims. They are understanding that the problem is over Islam. Let me tell you this on the occasion of this very week in which relief was going to be collected for the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The issue there is not that of a group of hungry Muslims. It is quite right that they are hungry; it is quite right that they are living under the hardest conditions from the point of view of the cold weather and shortage of fuel; that they are living under astronomical high prices. All that is correct. But if we give assistance and say that one must help it is not merely because they are hungry, unclothed, and cold; it is because of the issue of Islam and atheism [kofr]. That is, there Islam and atheism are confronting each other. And they have resisted bravely for 20 months, are still resisting, and have not yet surrendered. Bravo to those people; bravo to that Islam which has given them so much strength! In that situation we say that Islam must be helped. They want Islam to cease to be. If those very people, the Bosnian Muslims, let their Islam go and say they no longer want to be Muslims, that they have an ethnicity and nationality that goes beyond Islam, just like you—rest assured the problem will then end. Neither will Bosnia be dismembered, nor will the Serbs aggress. The international policymakers and the players on the stages of international politics will put an end to the problem then. But they are suffering all that because they are Muslims. We say that because they are Muslims Islam must be helped. The issue is not one of individuals and human beings; the issue is one of values.

What is being said is that in that same Bosnian war the people are coming to understand what crimes are being perpetrated. And what resistance they are putting up. And automatically the leaning of the pure-hearted youths there toward Islam increases and their loathing against those policymakers—who have created that situation and given support to the aggressor—especially Britain which is giving support in such a way—will be heightened.

Let's move away from that issue as well. I hope all Muslims will be roused with fervor; all have a sense of responsibility, all support Islam and not be so negligent. Is it not shameful that there are more or less one and a half billion Muslims with all those resources while so many Muslims are being suppressed by a bunch of brutal Serbs? Would they not be able to put an end to the problem by working together? May God awaken them from their slumber. [passage omitted]

The position of Islamic authority should be maintained and the Koran expresses the same meaning: People should be in absolute obedience to this religious authority. [passage omitted] This position is the hand and shadow of God and is generally responsible for maintaining divine values. [crowd chants approval] And as Ayatollah Khamene'i said: Things that have been achieved by the great religious personalities throughout history, in terms of power, glory, dignity, and greatness for Muslims, were because of this absolute obedience. When an order was issued, Muslims would not hesitate; they would submit. It was the same with the imams, peace be upon them, and their followers. In the same manner, the Muslims were obedient to the sixth Shi'i Imam Sadeq, peace be upon him, and other imams, peace be upon them, and the ulema and their successors.

You have seen this and subsequent miracles in the 1892 Tobacco rebellion and other events, when the ulema ordered a holy war. This must be maintained without damage. This is not a personal issue. It is not an ordinary human, governmental, or organizational issue; it is an issue of divine authority. Obedience to this authority is obedience to God. A sin against it is a sin against God. [passage omitted] Of course, this does not mean no one should not make any comments; not at all. Nor does it mean that the religious scholar or the just jurisprudent are sinless like the imams. Everybody can express his view and make suggestions. But obedience must be totally maintained so as to maintain the power of Islam and Muslims, so as to allow the divine authority to fight against the worldly powers, as did our honorable imam [Khomeyni].

There is another issue regarding our honorable and dear brother, the president, who has been highly praised: Khamene'i has said that in this country, in the past 60-70 years, we have not had a leader as capable, honest, and sincere as the president. In all honesty this was lofty praise. May God also guard him for us.

There is also an economic issue, and I would like to concentrate on it. Ayatollah Khamene'i has said: Compare our situation with those in neighboring countries and see how much better we are. This is the truth. In analyzing our daily affairs we should have two perspectives. We should neither deny the positive points, for this would mean a denial of God's blessings and would be followed by great punishment. If someone has truly served, in whatever post, his services should be recognized and praised. We should also see any possible problems and act to solve them with all sincerity, honesty, and without malice. If we maintain the two perspectives, society will move toward well being, otherwise it will not. If we only see the good and fail to notice the problems and shortages, we will naturally error. If we only see the shortages we would be making another mistake. [passage omitted]

Another issue which his eminence mentioned and to which we should pay attention was that we should think of a solution to our economic problems. He explained the issues of production and consumption. These are issues that do not concern just the government or just the nation; all must invest in them together. Production should increase and there is no other way than that, and consumption should decrease and there is no other solution. If production does not increase and remains as

it is, our situation will get worse day by day. If consumption is not controlled and does not decrease, no matter how much more we produce we will still engage in waste. [passage omitted]

If we stop wasting bread we will be $365 million better off each year. A great deal can be done with that, and many problems can be solved with it. A report also mentions that a third of foodstuffs are wasted in Iran. [passage omitted] What should be done about that? Who should observe such issues? That is where imports should be controlled, and that is not a joking matter. Why should luxury goods be imported? His eminence the leader also mentioned the same thing. Why should illegal goods be imported? [passage omitted]

Another issue is the control of luxuries, control of extravagance, control of foreign travel, and control of overspending, which should be implemented. Everyone is responsible. [passage omitted]

Of course, it is possible that some officials might not be aware of things. Not everyone is aware of the details. But those who know should feel responsible to confront the issue and also inform the authorities to say what goes on in such and such place; what comings and goings are taking place; what kind of entertaining is going on and what kind of travels take place. This kind of thing should be stopped and should be decisively confronted. When a decisive action is taken, a network begins operating to stop the implementation of that decisive action. The same corrupt persons have formed a chain; when one of them is about to be grabbed by the neck, pressure is exerted from here and there, telephone calls are made, letters are written, recommendations are made and strings are pulled saying that that he should be released. Sometimes they defend him saying that it is a disgrace to prosecute such a person. Is it a disgrace to implement justice? Who is disgraced if someone who has committed an act of treason is arrested? Yes, it is possible that someone might be disgraced. Yes he should be disgraced, but the grace of Islam, the country and authorities has been safeguarded and others will be more careful not to commit such acts. If there is negligence, all become bold. If decisive action is taken, all take notice. [crowd chants slogans]

On the same subject of prices, I would like to say one more brief sentence. Alongside all our other preoccupations, we must also do something for the low-income strata. Some of the high prices are inevitable, and nothing can be done about them, as in effect they have been imposed on us. No one, therefore, can be blamed. However, under the present circumstances, we must do something about the strata with no income, who cannot endure the impact of these bone-crushing high prices. We hope, God willing, these issues are taken into consideration when policies are being formulated. We know, of course, that these matters are being attended to. At the same time, prices must also be controlled, and people shcould not be left free to sell whatever they want at any price they wish. [passage omitted]

I wanted to say a few words about the issue of marja'iyat [the status of being a source of emulation], but I have run out of time. Very briefly, however, I would like to say I am very happy that the issue of marja'iyat is at present personified by His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Araki. We hope that, God willing, attempts made by others to take it to places [ja-ha] which are at odds, to say the least, with the system, the state, and the position of the guardianship of the Muslims' cause, may prove fruitless, which I am sure they will. [passage omitted]

Yazdi Criticizes Vatican Recognition of Israel

LD0301170694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Mr. Yazdi, head of the judiciary, spoke at today's meeting of the country's judiciary officials. While expressing surprise at the Vatican's stance in recognizing the usurping Zionist regime, he said: In international affairs it is necessary for the Vatican to uphold the religious views of the tradition of His Holiness Jesus Christ—peace be upon Him—and the views of His religious followers who are spread across the world, and it should not enter unjust political games that are tools of hegemonist powers against nations. [passage omitted]

Khamene'i Issues Christmas Message

LD0301183494 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1730 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Christmas message issued by Ayatollah 'Ali Hoseyni Khamene'i—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. On the festive anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ, son of Mary, the word of God, the chosen servant, and the great divine prophet, I congratulate all Christians, Muslims, and all those with faith in his eminence, in particular the Christian compatriots.

Armed with miracles and a divine call for human salvation from the darkness of dualism, unbelief, ignorance, and injustice to wisdom, justice, and divine worship, Jesus Christ was chosen for a divine mission and throughout his presence among men, did not hesitate for a moment to fight evil and call for good. Such is the lesson that must be learned by Christians and Muslims—who believe in the prophethood of his eminence.

Today more than ever, humanity needs such teachings, and Islam, which completes the Christian tradition, has placed the call for the good, worship, and excellence at the top of its program.

Lost humanity, which has control over the endless power of nature through the God-given knowledge, is now moving against these very aims—and this increases the responsibility of the faithful.

The dominant powers and governments, under the pretext of Christianity but in truth materialist and ignorant of the teachings and traditions of His Holiness Christ, have made life difficult for the innocent nations and peoples, and commit all forms of injustice against them.

The most tragic of these examples can be found in the present condition of the world. These include the unprecedented aggression of Serbs and Croats against the Bosnian Muslims and the continued aggression of the Armenian Government against the Azerbaijan Republic.

Undoubtedly the great powers, for many reasons, share the responsibility for these bitter and tragic events.

I ask the Almighty to shine his light of guidance on humanity and to give victory to the forces of goodness, worship, and justice against those of evil, ugliness, and suppression.

I should also thank my Christian compatriots for their stance regarding current events in the region and the world.

[Signed] Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i

[Dated] 3 January 1994

Rafsanjani Comments on Women's Role in Islamic Society

LD0101164494 Tehran IRNA in English 1557 GMT 1 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 1, IRNA—The president said today that the Islamic Republic of Iran, could, on the basis on the Holy Koran and the Shari'a, present for the first time ever an ideal model for role of women in society.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani speaking to officials in charge of the Presidential Bureau for Women's Affairs, termed women's activities in iran as one of the most healthy and progressive when compared to other countries.

Referring to women's role in building a healthy society, he stated that managing household affaires and bringing up children is a god-given trait of women.

In Islamic Iran, said the president, there is no hindrance to women's education and scientific growth and their holding important and sensitive jobs.

Touching on the youth problems faced by Western societies, he said youth in Iran are in "more healthy condition" than any other country across the globe.

Hoj. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that it is an "honour" for Iran's Islamic system to have a consolidated society.

Before his speech, the president's advisor for women's affairs, Shahla Habibi, briefed the gathering on the activities of bureau.

Pakistan

Foreign Secretary: 'No Progress' With India on Kashmir

BK0301164694 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] The seventh round of foreign secretary-level talks between Pakistan and India concluded in Islamabad today. The two sides held four sessions mostly devoted to the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a news conference in Islamabad today, Foreign Secretary Shaharyar M. Khan said that no progress was made on the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir at the foreign secretary-level talks between India and Pakistan, as the two sides have basic divergences. He said that for the first time, most of the time was devoted to the discussion of the Kashmir issue during all four sessions. Pakistan maintained its principled position that a solution to the Kashmir issue lay in a plebiscite on the basis of the UN resolutions. The Pakistan side rejected the Indian view that the UN resolutions are no longer relevant, and it was made clear that these resolutions are as relevant today as they were in 1948. Khan said Pakistan is willing to hold talks on the format for implementing the UN resolutions, and there is no change in Pakistan's principled stand in this connection. He said for Pakistan, the people of Kashmir are the central players, because it is they who must determine their future. He said the Kashmiri people should be consulted first on this issue.

The foreign secretary said Pakistan's first demand with regard to visible steps in Kashmir was reducing the repression and tension and releasing the jailed Kashmiri leaders. He said Pakistan wants the Kashmiri people to have free and unrestricted access to the international media, human rights organizations, members of parliament, and diplomats. He said that during the talks both sides paid maximum attention to the Kashmir issue, but difference of opinion persist at the same level as in the past. He said Pakistan remains committed to continued dialogue for the peaceful resolution of Kashmir and other issues, but in view of the fact that the repression in Kashmir is at its height and human rights continue to be violated there, Pakistan will not schedule any talks at the foreign secretary level or any other level until there is visible improvement in the occupied Kashmir situation.

Khan said it is untrue that Pakistan is assisting the freedom fighters. He said Pakistan has proposed a neutral monitor of the Line of Control to ensure and to let people see what is the real situation on the ground. He said India did not accept this proposal and maintained that it will monitor the situation itself. Khan said various other bilateral matters also were discussed. The Indian delegation told Pakistan that they will be ready to present their detailed viewpoint on issues such as Siachen, Sir Creek, and the Wullar Barrage within the next two weeks.

Answering questions from the press, Indian Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit said he held preliminary discussions on some suggestions which have to be considered by both sides, and that we will see how to proceed on these suggestions. He said despite basic divergences in views on the situation, we have agreed to search for ways and means to solve this [Kashmir] issue.

In the presence of Dixit Khan read a joint statement, which says both sides recognized that there are basic divergences on the Kashmir issue. The talks addressed all aspects of the Jammu and Kashmir issue and it was agreed that sincere efforts will be made to resolve it. Both sides stressed the need to engage in a meaningful dialogue with a view to solving all outstanding issues. The statement adds that the two sides will consult each other on the question of further talks at the foreign secretary level or any other level.

India Accused of 'Brutal Repression' in Kashmir

BK0401033694 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] In spite of its talks with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, India continues to indulge in gross violations of human rights and its forces are continuing a series of brutal activities in occupied Kashmir. They have martyred 13 more Kashmiris in the Bandipura, Baliha, Punch and Keran areas. The occupation forces also shot at a passenger bus at Keralahar near Baramula, injuring 17 people. The Indian forces cordoned off 12 villages in the Uri sector and arrested several persons during a house-to-house search. The freedom fighters hurled hand grenades at the Indian troops in Srinagar, injuring two soldiers.

Meanwhile, protest demonstrations were held in several areas of Srinagar yesterday against the killing of innocent people at the hands of the Indian forces. The demonstrators raised slogans against India and shops were closed in many areas.

Pakistan Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan says Islamabad remains committed to continuing the dialogue with India for a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue and other problems. However, in view of the fact that the brutal repression in occupied Kashmir is at its height and human rights continue to be violated, Pakistan will not schedule any talks with India at the foreign secretary or any other level until there is a visible improvement in the situation in occupied Kashmir.

Senator Rejects Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty

BK0401100094 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] The Senate resumed discussion today on president's address to the joint session of the parliament. Dr. Basharat Elahi and Syed Fasi Iqbal appreciated the policies of the government toward Kashmir. They complimented the government for bringing the issue into limelight. Syed Fasi Iqbal, who is the chairman of standing committee on information, on a point of order congratulated the government for strongly presenting Pakistan's point of view during the recent Pakistan-India talks.

Dr. Basharat Elahi taking part in the debate pinpointed lack of consensus between the government and the opposition on some national issues. He called for more attention for the promotion of education, science and technology, defense, and population planning. He stressed that Pakistan should not sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Mr. Rashid Rabbani appreciated the initiatives of the government to restore the economic conditions of the country leading to prosperity of the masses. He said that the government has taken steps to arrest price escalation and solve the problem of unemployment.

Bhutto Bans Public Statements on Nuclear Plants

BK0201085694 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 2 Jan 94 p 2

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 1—Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has strongly resented the statements of Federal Minister for Special Education Dr Sher Afghan and PAEC [Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission] Chairman Dr Ashfaq Ahmed about the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant.

The Prime Minister has, in a directive to these officals, asked them to refrain from issuing statements on such sensitive issues in public. She further said that if any [words indistinct] bring it to her notice directly. The Prime Minister has barred any minister from issuing statements about nuclear power plants in the future.

Energy Official Details Nuclear Achievements

BK3112152393 Islamabad PAKISTAN in Urdu 30 Dec 93 p 3

[Editorial: "Pakistan Has Full Capability in Nuclear Technology"]

[Text] The declaration by Dr. Ashfaq Ahmed, chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, that Pakistan is among the few countries in the world that have achieved effective capability in all fields of nuclear technology is highly reassuring. Pakistan has achieved self-sufficiency in uranium, and only locally-processed uranium is being used in nuclear power stations. Addressing the inaugural function of the second science conference at Aitchison College in Lahore, he disclosed that Pakistan is processing uranium by itself and making it usable. There are only a few countries that are self-sufficient in uranium. Most countries import uranium to meet their requirements, but Pakistan does not need to do so because it has its own uranium reserves. Uranium is a metallic element that is used as fuel in nuclear reactors or for producing energy.

Ashfaq Ahmed said that Pakistan has been successfully pursuing its nuclear program since 1976, and that Pakistani scientists do not receive any external assistance or cooperation in this regard. They are fulfilling their scientific duty by utilizing their own resources, which is a tremendous scientific achievement. Pakistani scientists and technologists have not allowed the shortage of funds to impede their work. They have built several major parts for a nuclear power plant that were previously imported, and have not let external impediments stand in the way of the smooth operation of their program. Pakistan's first nuclear power plant was supplied by Canada some 20-22 years ago, but due to international pressure it soon stopped supplying uranium, fuel, heavy water, and spare parts. This was a great challenge for Pakistan, which our scientists accepted with great dexterity. They succeeded in keeping the plant operational by utilizing local resources. China is the only country that has provided a 300-kilowatt nuclear power plant, now being constructed at Chashma.

Dr. Ashfaq Ahmed said that we are capable of building nuclear power stations. Nuclear energy is indispensable for Pakistan. Pakistan has no option but to use nuclear technology to increase electricity production, because it cannot meet all of its energy requirements by utilizing such conventional energy production resources as water, oil, gas, and coal. The country is facing power blackouts due to the shortage of electricity.

The nuclear energy chief said there are 6,550 nuclear medicine centers in various countries around the world, of which nine are in Pakistan. Several of these centers will be set up in the country to help diagnose and treat complicated diseases. The private sector will be encouraged to play a role in this field as well. He added that nuclear technology is also being used in the agricultural field, and 18 new crop varieties have been discovered. Ashfaq Ahmed declared that Pakistan's nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes.

Nuclear power plants generate 70 percent of the world's electricity. France meets 75 percent of its energy requirements with nuclear power plants. There are 424 nuclear power reactors in the world. Therefore, there is no reason why Pakistan should be asked to refrain from utilizing nuclear technology to increase electricity production, improve health care facilities, and boost agricultural production.

As far as the question of rolling back the nuclear program is concerned, it is entirely a political issue, and the nuclear scientists have nothing to do with it. The Chashma nuclear power plant will start producing electricity in 1997-98. Pakistan needs several similar nuclear power plants. If France had not refused to supply the nuclear reprocessing plant for enriching uranium, Pakistan would have been able to set up nuclear power stations by now. In any case, the country's future energy requirements can only be met through the establishment of nuclear power plants.

U.S. Accused of Targeting Islamic Countries

BK0301100194 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 2 Jan 94 p 3

[Editorial: "The Atom, American Concern, and Islamic Countries"]

[Text] The distinguished journal ECONOMIST has disclosed that the United States has decided to intensify surveillance of nuclear facilities in Muslim countries because of fears about the possible proliferation of nuclear arms in Islamic countries by the end of this century, and that it will take military action against them if they do not refrain from making atom bombs. Pakistan is the only country in the Islamic world that has acquired the capability to manufacture nuclear weapons. According to American experts, Iran is making serious efforts to manufacture nuclear weapons, but it may take eight to 10 years to succeed in this task. Besides, the Islamic countries are so rich with oil wealth that any one of them may become inclined to acquire nuclear weapons.

The apprehensions of the United States and its allies reflect their thinking and logic. Pakistan has assured the Clinton administration in clear-cut terms that its nuclear program is meant only for peaceful energy purposes, that it does not have any intention of manufacturing nuclear weapons, and that it will strictly adhere to its policy of not transferring nuclear technology to any other country. Despite this, the United States is not ready to trust these assurances.

Besides Pakistan, the United States is also planning to take to task those Muslim countries that may attain nuclear capability within eight to 10 years, as well as those with the financial capacity to buy such weapons. This clearly shows that to establish world supremacy under the new world order, the United States is targeting Islamic countries by raising the specter of nuclear proliferation. Under one pretext or another, Iraq and Libya have already been U.S. targets. Other Islamic countries—especially Pakistan and Iran—should work out a common strategy to foil these American designs.

Ambassador-Designate to U.S. Rejects Pressure

BK0101092894 Islamabad THE NATION in English 1 Jan 94 p 1

[Excerpt] Rawalpindi (PPI)—The Ambassador designate of Pakistan to the United States, Dr Maleeha Lodhi has brushed aside the impression that Pakistan is framing its polices in accordance with the dictates of the United States.

In an informal chat with newsmen at the reception hosted in her honour by the Rawalpindi Press Club here on Friday evening she said "they do try to influence our policies but we must not under rate ourselves."

"Despite all the pressure we will not let happen any thing against the national interest as our sovereignty is very

dear to us," she added. She said many things which did not happen would have taken place, had we succumb to the us pressure.

She expressed her ignorance when her attention was drawn towards the reports that 500 US commandoes will come to Pakistan for joint exercises. Asked what Pakistan can gain by allowing the foes of Islam to use its territory for enhancing their professonal skills, she said "this question should be posed to the policy makers." She pointed out that the job of diplomats is entirely different from the policy makers adding that the diplomats are there to communicate and articulate policies formulated by the policy makers. [passage omitted]

Visa Restrictions Imposed on Afghans

BK0401075194 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 4 Jan 94 p 12

[Excerpt] Islamabad—To effectively monitor fresh influx of Afghan refugees, the government has imposed visa restriction on all Afghan national crossing over to Pakistan through land as well as air route.

The reason which led to this drastic measure is that in recent days well over 40,000 Afghans, including men, women and children, had crossed over to Pakistan. There were serious apprehensions that their number might further increase if effective precautionary measures were not taken.

According to well informed official sources the government has conveyed to Rabbani-led Afghan government the reasons for such a drastic action. However, the response of Kabul regime is not known.

Pakistan embassy in Kabul has also been apprised of the new policy and directed to follow a certain procedure before granting visas to intending Afghan nationals visiting Pakistan.

In view of the federal government's decision the administration in the Frontier province [North-West Frontier Province—NWFP] has been directed to keep an eye on illegal arrivals from Afghanistan and "maintain the sanctity of the border". It was also requested that a record of Afghan nationals crossing the border every day should also be maintained.

The sudden increase in the number of Afghans crossing over to Pakistan is due to heavy fighting in Kabul and its surroundings. A recent report of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees indicated that a large number of those Afghan refugees who were repatriated under the UN umbrella have also started returning to Pakistan and are desperately trying to reoccupy their houses in different refugee camps in the NWFP.

Pakistan played a host to well over three million Afghan refugees during the Mujahideen's Jehad against the Soviet forces and Dr Najibollah-led Kabul regime. [passage omitted]

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